THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, what they are trying to say and what I have understood is this. This law is good. You are trying to protect the interests of labour. But the interests of labour cannot be protected if they go beyond the continental shelf, if they go beyond 200 miles in the open sea. Secondly, what Mr. Jibon Roy says in the absence of a law protecting the rights of members, you cannot use this law effectively because then again the dispute will be there. As Mr. Fernandes says, we have signed the Law of the Seas. We are a signatory to the United Nations Convention of 1995. You can go to the United Nations to get this extension to us. He is only adding to your efforts.

SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI: Madam, I share the concerns of the Members. First, I want to make it clear that not only in the territorial waters, if you go outside also, then those ships which are coming to our sea-shore, they have every right to give a complaint to the concerned person operating at the sea-bed. It is not necessary for us to go into the sea and make the complaints. The member-ships when they are coming to any port which we have signed there, they can give that complaint. Based on that, they can give the complaint. We have the right to take action. That provision is there. Therefore, I assure the Members that whatever other suggestions they have given, we will definitely consider them. I request the Members to pass the Bill.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now we shall take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2 to 7 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI N. THAMBI DURAI: Madam, I move:

That the Bill be passed.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Thambi Durai, congratulations! This is the first Bill you have piloted and got it passed.

SHRI N. THAMBI DURAI: Yesterday also you have been allowed me to move one and it was passed.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It was passed yesterday! Good, you are a successful Now, we will take up the Railways. Why the train is 'sitting' behind? He came before time!

MOTION RE: 'STATUS PAPER ON RAILWAYS: SOME ISSUES AND OPTIONS' AND THE BUDGET (RAILWAYS), 1998-99

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): Madam, I beg to move:

"That the Status Paper on Railways: Some Issues and Options laid on the Table of the House on 28th May, 1998, be taken into consideration."

The Vice-Chairman, Shri John F. Ffernandes *in the Chair*

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN (Mahrashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am very happy that the Railway Ministry has made sincere efforts in bringing before the House some very important aspects of the working of the Railway Ministry in a paper which shows both the plus points and the minus points and some points on which the Railway Ministry itself feels very much concerned.

Sir, I think this kind of a document which has been given to us, the Status Paper on Railways: Some Issues and Options, I wish we had more time to go through all the issues which have been raised. There are some issues which I can certainly take up as major issues which I consider are very important and which, according to me are going to help the Railway Ministry considerably. While presenting this Paper, I am quite sure, the hon. Minister must have gone through all the aspects of the issues together with the Budget for 1998-99. I do not know if both the things are taken together. Am I right? The Status Paper as well as the Budget

are going to be taken up together and that is why, while considering the Budget, I was really surprised that it is not in the format in which the Budget is normally presented to the House. It is in a different manner. In a descriptive format he has given all the aspects of the question. But, one disturbing aspect is, he has made a conscious effort to raise about Rs. 450 crores within six months. This is June. Whatever effort has been made on raising this Rs. 450 crores, it is on passenger fare. This is going to fetch about Rs. 900 crores for the whole year. I hope, I am right. The hon. Minister does not say either way!

So, I take that my assumption is correct that the entire amount is going to be of the order of Rs. 900 crores. He has not made any effort to raise tariff on freight. The reasons given, according to me, are not very convincing.

I can understand his anxiety and correctly so. Had it been an increase in the tariff on freight traffic, it was bound to have a cascading effect and thereby it would have added up to the spiralling prices and every hon. Member of this House will agree with this kind of an approach that cascading effect has to be avoided at any cost.

But the kind of arithmetics that he has put forth requires to be gone into because most of the money, which he has been able to save, becomes the pensionary charges for which money has been provided and which comes to almost Rs. 4000 crores. Now, the age of retirement has been raised from 58 years to 60 years. That is why immediate spending of that amount of money will not be required. So, the kind of saving that is available there has been diverted for some other purposes by him. I am sure that almost more than Rs. 1200 crores are going to be available and that money could have been utilised, saving the passengers from paying the larger amount of fare. If it was possible, it could have been done. I can understand his anxiety. Sir, it is a correct proposition that we have to understand the magnitude of the problem which the railway is facing. It is the second largest network in the world. The figures given in Chapter-I of the Status Paper on Indian Railways clearly show that their route kilometres come to 62,729, electrified route kilometres come to 13517, for locomotives they have given the number, wagons, 2,72,127, coaches, 33,849, number of stations, 6,984, etc. Another very relevant figure which, in fact, needs to be looked into is the number of staff. The number of staff is 15,83,600 and the amount which is earned is Rs. 16,668 crores are freight revenue and Rs. 6,633 crores as passenger revenue during 1996-97. So, it comes to about Rs. 23,000 crores a year. The amount spent on staff comes to Rs. 10,515. The amount spent on fuel comes to Rs. 1,377 crores. The other things have not been referred to. But the fact remains that this amount of staff cost comes to more than 50 per cent and if you take into account the pensionary charges and oher benefits like increased TA/DA, then it comes to 56 per cent of the total expenditure that has been booked. So, this 56 per cent seems to be on the high side if the total expenditure on operational purposes are considered of a particular order. If the staff charges are going to be 56 per cent, it clearly shows that there is tremendous amount of scope for bringing about economy and we should try to see as to how far we can succeed. I am not in favour retrenchment of a large number of workers. But, at the same time you can adjust workers in such a fashion that it does not lead to retrenchment. You can avoid new recruitment in different areas and the staff which is considered surplus can be absorbed in different Departments where new recruitment is required. You can give them the necessary training, if required, and absorb them in other sections. But, by any standards, 56 seems to be on the high side. This is the first point which the hon. Minister has to look into. If you see the achievements given on page four and if we consider 1950-51 as 100, then passenger kilometres come to 468, coaches, 229, and wagon, 257. These two figures are very important. It has been stated, "Whereas the index of inputs cost has risen by 16 times, the freight rates have gone up by only 10 times and passenger fares only by seven times."

This is a different kind of interpretation they have put in. The wagons which are availble are in short supply. The condition of wagons is also not good; much more deplorable is the condition of coaches. To travel in a railway coach has

become a matter of great shame for all of us. We have been able to travel in some foreign trains and really.

We did not feel we were travelling about 300 Kms. or 400 Kms. and with great comfort within 3 or 3-1/2 hours we were able to reach our destination. There is no rush as we find when we go to our railway stations. Unlike here, where the people just hurry in, railway station is a sight to be seen there. Here, everybody is trying to push each other and the way they are travelling, in spite of the fact that the railway fares have gone up, I do not think that you can possibly take any credit for giving good service. There is no service. You are increasing the fares and you are increasing all other charges but at the same time, you are not providing the number of coaches which are required. So, you look into this aspect and try to see that for comfortable travelling, you provide the required number of coaches. Sir, indigenously we have been able to put up factories for manufacturing coaches and wagons. Why is it that we have not been able to fully utilise the capacity and why are we diverting some of the orders specially in the case of wagons to other parties. This is a general complaint I have been receiving especially from the people coming from West Bengal. They have been complaining that the capacity is not fully utilised. You are placing orders on the other wagon manufacturing people, who, in fact, do not have that kind of a capacity. It is a matter of grave concern to all of us. My request to the hon. Minister will be, looking into the projection of the traffic, the coaches will have to be increased, facilities will have to be increased and outdated and aged wagons and coaches should be discarded as early as possible. You are utilising all these wagons and coaches for a number of years at the cost of the travelling public. My request to you will be, kindly look into the matter seriously and try to provide convenient coaches, if not comfortable coaches, which can be considered as something reasonable.

Now, I will turn to the financing of the Railway Plan. This is the most important aspect which we have to go into thoroughly. There was a meeting which was called sometime back by your predecessor and he wanted all the Members of the Committee to support his effort for getting greater budgetary allocation. I can well understand his problem. If you go through the chart on page 7 of the Status Paper, you will know from where the money is raised. The money is raised through internal resources, through market borrowings and through capital from the General Exchequer. If you see the Eighth Five Year Plan, the details of which are given on page 8, you will find that the total amount comes to Rs. 18,830 crores which forms 58% of the internal resources. While the total amount raised in the market-Indian Railways Finance Corporation (IRFC), O.Y.W. and BOLT, through which you tried to raise the resources during the Eighth Five Year Plan comes to Rs. 6,616 crores which is almost 71% of the total, the Budgetary support is Rs. 7,311 crores.

I can well understand the difficulty of the Railway Ministry. But, I have to get information on one point. I have not been able to understand why you are trying to bracket all these three. Bracketing all the three gives completely a wrong picture. The average cost of market borrowing is high, and at the same time there is a repayment obligation also. In the case of the Indian Railway Finance Corporation it is understandable because there is a burden. But, in the case of OYW and BOLT it is not understandable. I do not know whether you have an MOU with these organizations. Has any counter-guarantee been given by the Government while raising resources? Why are you trying to bracket them with the Indian Railway Finance Corporation? If they are separated, then I think, that the burden which you are showing at page 9 is not correct. If there is a counter-guarantee or if you have some kind of understanding with them, then it is a different matter. But, I would like to have an explanation on this point. So far as the repayment is concerned in 1987-88 you had to pay Rs. 25 crores. But, now in 1988-89 it has gone up to Rs. 2,992 crores. I do not think that there is anything seriously wrong so long as this amount of money which you have raised by way of market borrowings is used for the proper purpose. If it gives you results, if you can complete railway projects which, in fact, would have lingered for five years, if you are to complete them within two years time, then you

save three years' extra expenditure and get extra income. So, in fact, there should be no cause for any concern that you have to pay back. Certainly you have to pay back. Even big industrial houses also have been taking money through market borrowings. They are right to raise that money and pay it back after the entire money has been put to a proper use. But, if you have a project which in the beginning had been contemplated for completion in five years and if it subsequently takes 10 years or 15 years then, of course, nobody can help you. This money is to be used for that purpose, that is, for completing the projects which are in an advanced stage. But, if it is thinly spread, then again the same problem is bound to be there. In the market borrowings also if the projects are not completed in time, then it is not going to help you at all. How this money has been used, is a pertinent question. I would like to have an explanation from the hon. Minister on this point. Let him explain how this money has been utilised. If it has been used as in the case of the Konkan Railway, I can understand. The Konkan Railway is a corporation. They have been able to raise money and complete the project in time. That is why we can be proud of this project. Then, there are a number of projects which you started 10 years back, 15 years back, or 20 years back, and they are still going on. I can understand some of the hon. Ministers starting railway lines in their own areas. There is nothing wrong in it. After all we are all human beings. And being human beings the temptation is always there. When the Minister belongs to Bihar, he is bound to do something for Bihar. He is also bound to do something for his constituency. But, it should not be at the cost of other areas. Because of better reaction in Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the govt. was forced to announced some projects with substantial provisions in these areas which according to me is a novel feature. Therefore, immediate attention had to be paid towards Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. It is a very sorry state of affairs that you have not given sufficient thought for taking up new railway lines in these areas. In the status paper the projects which have taken more than the stipulated time should have also been indicated. Then, do you have any master plan for the entire country? Strategic lines are required. For market purposes certain important market places have to be connected.

Do you have such a Master Plan? In the case of roads, I am sure, they have got a Master Plan with them for the next 15 to 20 years. If any revision is required, it is reflected in the budget that year. Have a Master Plan for Railways also. Indicate the railway lines in it. It should not be that I am asking something and you are trying to grant me something. That sort of a situation has to be avoided. It should be there in your perspective outlook for another 15-20 years. That Master Plan should be provided and in that if the railway line proposals are fitted in, there is nothing to complain about. But according to me it is all *ad hoc*. Everything is *ad hoc*. The Railway Minister is pleased to sanction this line or that line without any rational thinking.

I have seen a number of projects where Bhumi Pujans have been done twice or thrice. The foundation stones are lying there, big pillars are there. But hardly any work has been done. This is the situation in which we are going to run this kind of railway line. We are taking pride that ours is the second biggest network in the entire world. This is not a thing about which you can be proud of. That is why my request to you is, plan in such a manner that you should be able to fit in the entire Master Plan. That is my outlook of the Railways.

If some departure, i.e. five per cent, two per cent, is there, I can understand it; not a hundred per cent. What is being done is just an *ad hoc* thing. You are pleased to do certain things. A large number of missing links are there. Short areas are taken up without showing the forward or backward linkages. But the forward line is not there, the backward line is not there, it is standing in between. What is the idea? What for you have started that line, nobody is able to understand. Now, I understand that there is a railway line from Beed to Ahmednagar. That is a totally isolated one. I heard that the line goes up to Kalyan and from Kalyan there is an alternate route to Bombay. A further line is not provided for. This Beed Nagar line where the Bhumi Pujan was done, I do not understand why it was done. Unfortunately, I had to be

present there. I was present there and I could see the predicament of the Railway Minister. He had to say that though this was done before, he will see to it that the work is started this time.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA (West Bengal): Where was this secular pujan done?

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: It was done in Beed in Maharashtra State I was there twice. Nobody could understand why the Bhumi Punjan was going on. The surprising aspect of the whole thing is that in this year 1998-99 not a pie has been provided for this. You owe some explanation to this House. Whosoever the Minister may be, it is totally irrelevant, so long as it is the commitment of the Railways. If y ou have started the work and if you do not provide even a pie for that kind of project, then what is the idea of having a Bhumi Pujan and tom-tomming the whole thing that we have been able to serve such a backward area? This is a very important area from where you get an alternate route. For that also nobody seems to have any kind of definite idea and definite approach about the whole thing. So, my request to you is, Sir, please look into these aspects and try to find out as to how far you have been able to provide very important links from the national point of view. Unfotunately, there are areas in an advanced State which are backward.

The Marathwada region of ex-Hyderabad area is a backward area. You must have seen this morning. I do not know whether you were present. There was a demand for a separate Telengana state. There is a demand for a separate Vidarbha state. I am totally opposed to this idea of separate States. At the same time, the demand is arising because there has not been a proper development of these areas. In spite of the fact that this area had been with the advanced areas, the advanced areas are still not looking to their new brothers in such a manner that there is equitable distribution and equitable development of the entire area. You would be surprised to know that neither a national highway nor a railway line was there for fifty years. We have been shouting. Ultimately, after a long time, a railway line was constructed.

Sir, one has to see these things for himself. Then only one can understand. I think it should be made compulsory that the Railway Minister should not travel by plane. He should always go by train; that too, in second class, so that he is able to understand things. He should not announce beforehand. Do not announce beforehand that you are going to travel by such and such train. If you travel by train, you would be able to see as to what problems the travelling public are facing and what facilities are available to the passengers.

DR. BIPLAB DASGUPTA: He should travel without announcing.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Nobody would allow him. Not knowing that he is the Railway Minister, they would not allow him to enter the compartment.

Anyway, My only request is that there are certain areas which deserve to be carefully looked into. Now, we have development Boards in respect of certain backward areas of Maharashtra state. A Presidential Order was issued. The whole purpose was that the Governor of the concerned State should take proper care and see that the backlog in respect of the development of these backward areas is removed. At least, in the case of Maharashtra, we have three Development Boards; for Vidarbha, Marathwada and the rest of Maharashtra. It becomes the responsibility of the Governor to see that proper attention is paid to the development of the backward region.

Apart from the responsibility of the Governor, my request to the Ministries at the Centre would be this. Since the Presidential Order is there, it means, the Government of India has also accepted that these are backward areas and that these backward areas need to be served. Therefore, every Ministry at the Centre should have a proper approach to this problem and see that proper railway and other facilities are provided in these areas.

May I tell you another instance relating to my own district? I have been pleading for this railway line for the last twenty-five years, if not forty years. I have been pleading all these years. I have been pleading for this railway line not becuase of any local consideration. There

is a thermal power plant at Parli Vaijnath. For that you require transport of coal from Karimnagar district. The entire coal has to be brought *via* Vikarabad, which means, double the distance. I have been requesting even the Electricity Board. It would be an economic proposition for the Electricity Board to invest money in this area and see that this shortest railway line is constructed. But neither the Railways nor the State Electricity Board is looking into the matter to see that there is quick transport of coal and other materials from different areas.

Sir, in the Vidarbha area, we produce a huge quantity of cement. Cement is there. Cotton bales are there. We also have foodgrains in good quantity. You would be able to supply coal through this loopline even up to Nasik. I have been told that it is the Board which is going to do it. Different dates have been given for the completion of this line. This year also, the hon. Minister, in his speech, mentioned that the Adilabad-Mudkhed line would be completed this year. But he is equally vague. He does not give any date. Earlier, it was said '1997'; then, '1998'. This year, again, the Minister is equally vague. He says: '1998-99'. It could be any date. But let me be assured that, at least, in 1998-99, you would complete this line so that you are able to transport coal from the nearest area.

I am sorry I have gone to the other aspect of the question.

SHRI RAM NAIK: What did you say? Parli Vaijnath?

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Parli Vaijnath.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Mudkhed?

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Mudkhed is different. The Mudkhed-Adilabad line will be connecting the main line from Hyderabad to Delhi. That is the area which gets connected. It is the shortest distance for bringing coal.

Singareni Colliery is the main colliery from which we are getting coal. Wardha valley is also going to provide coal to this thermal power station. That is why this is a very important line. Somehow or other this did not get the kind of priority which, in fact, was called for. I do not know the private agency to which this work has been given. It has lagged behind. I request you kindly to see that this line is completed in time.

Another important issue is about the sources of revenue which, in fact, are necessary to be examined. I have not been able to understand and appreciate why it is that you are shy of raising the market borrowing. Why should you be afraid of raising the market borrowing? You have given the total amount right from Rs. 25 crores to Rs. 2,600 crores in 1998-99. You are bound to pay back.

The money that you raised from the market will have to be paid back. So long as this money is properly utilised, I do not find any reason why the Railways should unnecessarily fight shy of raising the money. That does not mean that we are not going to support you so far as the budgetary support of the Government is concerned.

I do not know whether the Railway Ministry will be able to satisfy the House about its perception of the extra loading capacity. This is also another area which needs to be gone into deeply. Every year you say, "20 million tonnes more." Every year you are adding 20 million tonnes. Why can't you give us the exact capacity, your maximum capacity and the percentage being utilised out of that for that kind of a purpose? A 5 per cent increase in the passengers and 20 million tonnes increase in the freight--these are the two yardsticks you have given us. I want to understand from you, with the available wagons, the total capacity, how much you should be able to do and how much you are actually doing. That will give us an idea in terms of percentage, in what percentage you are trying to achieve your targets.

Another issue about which we feel rather disturbed is about the railway accidents. The convenient way in which you try to give us your figures is in terms of percentage. Percentage is all right, but percentage is not going to satisfy anyone.

Another anomaly which has been pointed out by the hon. Minister of Railways is about law and order which is supposed to be the responsiblity of the State Government concerned. The Railway Protection Force is supposed to be in charge of looking after the

property of the Railways. So, there is a dichotomy in the administration. Because of this confusion, if the State Governments are ready to take over the responsibility, you have to give the entire responsibility to the State Governments or you have to handle the whole thing yourself. You will have to sit with the State Governments and try to find out the exact difficulties and why you are not able to take immediate action on the gangs which are operating. I am sure, coming from Bihar, you must be aware of the gangs operating on different routes.

That is also another study, which the hon. Minister should himself conduct.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: I think, you are a ware of it. You were Home Minister of the country for a long time.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: I had been Home Minister of the country, but the Home Ministry does not control the law and order in the States. I hope you are aware of it. Though I was in charge, this is a point which, in fact, is bothering me. Becuase of the dual charge, nobody seems to be responsible. Regular gangs are operating. You will be surprised to know, when I left the Chief Ministership, I used to travel by second class having my own bag with me. There were some friends, who were trying to take that bag. I said: No, I will carry my bag. Somebody must be interested in seeing as to what was there in the bag. Since I was not handing over the bag, they might have felt that there must be something valuable in it. I had a meeting in Sholapur. There were papers and a shaving kit. There was no money in it. But, even that bag was snatched by some of the robbers from the first class compartment. This is the situation. Regular gangs are operating and we are just helpless in the matter. The State Government says you are responsible, and you say, the State Government is responsible. In this way gangs are merrily operating. Regularly passengers are handed over from one gangs to another at particular stations saying. "that man has not that much amount of money. I have not succeeded. I hand him over to you." This is the real situation. I am not trying to over-play or over-emphasise any aspect of it. These are realities of life which you withness while travelling by the railways. Since we travel quite often, we know what happens in each train every time we travel by it.

There is one thing more which, I have been trying to understand. What exactly was the reason for the freight revenue not increasing? This is a matter of a very minute study. I have a figure with me given by you, which clearly shows that the freight, which was carried by the railways in 1950-51 was 89 per cent, in 1996-97 has come down to 40 per cent. From 89 per cent it has come back to 40 per cent. And passenger traffic also, which was 80 per cent in 1950-51, has now come down to 20 per cent. So, it is a matter of great concern so far as the Railway administration is concerned. It is not so simple as you are trying to explain away that if you were to increase the freight charges, the traffic gets diverted. That is not the only reason. There are a number of other factors also, which need to be looked into. See the way services are given by trucks. They carry the goods to the destination right up to the door of the customer and there is no pilferage. But, in the case of the railways this is the usual thing. You will find that the luggage which is sent even by the Railways, has no guarantee. It is most likely to be pilfered. The pilferage is on such a big scale that it requires an indepth study. My request to you will be to appoint a study group consisting of experts of international repute, who should be able to understand and study the problem objectively. This is a very disturbing thing. If it has come down from 89 per cent to 40 per cent, then, of course, there is something basically wrong with our administration. So, appoint someone, who is having an international repute and also have representatives of the Railways, Transport Ministry and the Finance Ministry and make a thorough study and go at the root of the problem as to why this freight is getting diverted to the road traffic which, in fact, is an additional burden on the scarce resources that we have.

I have got the figures which have been given by you. This shows how much we are wasting in terms of diesel which is being utilised for that kind of purpose. In fact, Railways are more energy efficient compared to roads. They are almost four times more economical in land use, in terms of social costs, in terms of

environmental damage becuase they are more environmental friendly. It has been estimated that if financial inputs are consciously increased in favour of rail more to secure a reveral of 40:60, saving on diesel alone at the present level will be about Rs. 5,330 crores of foreign exchange per annum. So, this is the saving on diesel which is a scarce resource. But somehow no body is in favour of sending their goods by rail. You have to go deep into the matter and try to find out as to why things are happening in that fashion. I have mentioned two or three points on your 'Status Paper'. I have mentioned some important aspects.

Now, I will turn to some of the railway lines which I have in view. Your colleague, the hon. Minister of State for Railways is aware of the point that I have been raising in almost every meeting. That is about the Division which has been established at Nanded some ten years back. Thereafter circles have been created, Divisions have been created, they are fully equipped and they are fully operating. This is the only Division in which the staff is at Secunderabad. They are supposed to work for Nanded Division. They are trying their level best to transfer the staff. Neither they are succeeding in transferring the staff nor are they succeeding in recruiting the staff. So, this is the predicament in which we are living in. Why are you not able to make this Division operational and see that all decisions are taken at the Division level? According to my information, this Division is the only Division where decisions are not being taken and they are referred to the higher authorities at Secumdrabad. That is why delays are bound to occur. No facilities are available there. You have to provide the Divisional buildings. You have the of provide the staff quarters. You have to provide all the equipment. You have acquired almost 100 to 150 acres of land. But nothing seems to be happening. I have seen that there is a small dispensary which has been constructed by the Railways. But it is laying idle. There is no doctor. There is no nurse. If employees fall sick they are not able to have any kind of facility in this small dispensary at Nanded. These make this Nanded dispensary fully operational and make it part of control circle at Mumbai.

Please take up Nanded to Akola line because it has to be connected up to Delhi. This was a metre-gauge line. Now, this metre gauge has been snapped from Purna to Mudkhed. Further line from Mudkhed to Hyderabad will have to be constructed. This is the missing link. It has not yet been constructed. My request to you will be, please take up this line on a priority basis. This is the missing link.

Another thing is there is a small piece of line from Karimnagar to Nizamabad. You have started some work. But I do not know about the shape of this work. This line has been sanctioned. Please let me know what kind of progress has been made. If it is going to be completed well in time, then, I would request you to kindly extend this line up to Udgir in Latur district. In the Nanded district there is a place called Deghloor. This line should be constructed from Nizamabad-Deghloor to Udgir so that it is connected with the main line which goes from Parli Vaijynath to Vikarabad. My request will be to connect Latur Road to Nanded and Parli to Nanded so that this Division becomes operational.

Having created a division, you have not connected all these lines up to that area. So, the connecting of all these places is very necessary. One or two things more, and I have done, Sir. Now I come to the condition of coaches in which the public has to travel. In fact, our Railways have started very late. That is why they say that you can just have only nine coachs and not more. Actually, the sanctioned capacity is twelve coaches, and somethimes, sixteen coaches. But they say that a platform is not able to take up so many coaches and that is why, they are trying to restrict the number to nine. The Konkan Railway was started late. They agitated over the matter and the whole thing has been sanctioned. Now they are able to take there railway line up to VT and they get all the facilities. They are asking our railways to stop your train at Kurla. Our request is that instead of Kurla, we would like to go up to VT. All the platforms and other facilities should be provided as early as possible. Now, since the hon. Minister of State for Railways is from that area, I am sure that he will look into the matter and will see to it that all these drawbacks, which need to be attended to, will be immediately

attended to by him, and he will see to it that these backward areas do not suffer merely because they are coming late. We are late in coming to Mumbai. But we should not be penalised on that count. This area is totally cut off and my request to you will be, try to connect Nanded with Pune. Pune is still far off from us. We have to go either via Kalyan or by a goods train. Kindly run a new train on that line--express or passenger--which should be able to go up to Pune, where a large number of offices are located, and we should be able to take full advantage of the new railway line.

I think, these were some of the points which I thought I should make a mention. I will request the hon. Minister to anwer some of the points while giving his reply to the debate. Thank you.

PROF. RAM KAPSE (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the Status Paper on the Railways--Some Issues and Options — was presented a few days ago and the Railway Budget is also before us. I would congratulate the Railway Minister for presenting the Status Paper at a proper time. Such an exercise was done eight years before by Shir George Fernandes. But the problem was that, that Status Paper was never debated, was never discussed and enough attention was not given to that Status Paper. Luckily, this time, the Status Paper came at a proper time. We could go through it, and immediately, the Railway Budget also followed. We can study both together, and therefore, we are happy about the Status Paper and the Budget. Already, a debate has been started about the Status Paper, and in the light of the Status Paper, the Budget also can be discussed. This gives a new insight to the people. One question which has been posed by the Status Paper is whether the Railways should be treated as a commercial enterprise or a public utility. My reply to this question is, it is both--commercial enterprise as well as public utility. Both the functions are combined in one organisation which is the second largest organisation in the world under a single management. They have to fulfil both the expectations. This is a commercial enterprise. So, they have to run the Railways commercially. But, at the same time, if they neglect the public utility part of it, nobody is going to accept it because the Railways have grown in that manner. The institution itself has grown in such a manner that we expect many things from the Railways by way of Public utility. We can take some example. As far as national integrity is concerned, the Railways have a role to play. As far as defence purpose is concerned, the Railways have a part to play. We have to take into consideration the Railways as a very beneficial organisation for all these matters. So, we cannot say that this is not a public utility. This is only a commercial institution. But while trying to fulfil both the expectations, the Railways are failing in both ways. It has failed as a commercial enterprise because it is not run on commercial lines and the progress made by it is very slow. Many a time, the working of the Railways is as if it is a Government Department.

This is not expected of the Railways. So, it should be commercially viable everytime, and at the same time, the public utility part also should be taken into account. But there are many public aspirations from the Railways and the Railways fall short of their expectations in that respect also. Therefore, passengers are dissatisfied, most of the Members of Parliament are dissatisfied, and at the same time, experts are also dissatisfied becuase of this dual responsibility. Now, there was a mention by Shri S.B. Chavan Ji about the borrowings by the Railways. His question was: "Why are you shy of public borrowings? Big industrial houses also do the same." But I would like to clarify that the big industrial houses when they borrow, they can earn much more by way of those borrowings because nobody is going to obstruct them. Here, after they borrow, if there is a hike in passenger fare, naturally, there will be objection by the public and they have to manage. This is a monopoly and we will have to see to it that common man's interests are protected. So, both ways, the Railways have a disadvantage and we should also take that into account. There are many social obligations which the Railways have to discharge. In the Status Paper, all those social obligations have been given, and I would like to read out some of them. I would request the Members to help the Railways because there are so many social obligations which they are discharging. Indian Railways discharge social obligations in the

form of loss on transport of essential commodities carried at lower rates, below costs; loss on passengers and other coaching services, loss on uneconomic branch lines; loss on new lines opened for traffic in the last fifteen years, including the Calcutta Metro and the Konkan Railways. These are the recent happenings. Then freight concession to the North-Eastern States, security patrolling and fifty per cent of the cost of maintaining the Government Railway Police for maintenance of law and order in the operation of the Railways even though it lies totally in the domain of responsibility of the State Government.

4 P.M.

These are social obligations which are discharged by the Railways. How are we going to compensate the Railways for these social obligations? There is a novel suggestion by one Mr. Y.P. Anand who was an ex-Chairman of the Railway Board, and he had suggested that whatever amount the Railways has to spend for these social obligations, compensation should be paid by the Central Government to the Railways for this purpose becuase, in a way, they are following the public utility expectation of the Central Government and of the public. So, I support the suggestion of Mr. Y.P. Anand about the compensations to be given to the Railways for the social obligations that they are performing. I support it, and I request all the Members to support it. How much is the component? Almost 2000 crores of rupees are spent on this and the Railways deserves compensation in this matter and I request that the Central Government should look into the matter.

Then, every year whatever capital support from the General Exchequer was given to the Railways, that is dwindling. It is coming down. We can study the Fifth Plan and the Eighth Plan and we can know for ourselves that it is dwindling. So, in the given circumstances, this compensation is a must and I support this idea.

I congratulate the Railway Ministry for this Budget also. One thing is certain, they have taken a very bold step of making a reduction in cross subsidisation of passenger traffic by freight. The freight share in 1950-51 was 89 per cent. I agree with Shankarraoji that there is not only one reason as to why this share has come down. It has come down to 40 per cent. There is not only one reason. But, at the same time, the main reason is that because of this cross subsidisation between freight charges and passenger fares, every year we went on giving this cross subsidy and ultimately the Railways suffered, as far as the freight is concerned. So, this is after a very long duration that the Railway Minister has taken a very bold step, and the Railways have reduced this cross subsidy. This reduction we should welcome because slowly if the freight is on the increase, many achievements can be done. Railways have a special eco-friendly nature and we should support the Railways, as far as these things are concerned. And there are many other things for which the Railways need consideration. On page 12 it is stated:

"Favourable characteristics of rail transportation are given. Railways are more than six times as energy efficient as the roads. They are almost four times more economical in land use. Social costs in terms of environmental damage, degradation are significantly lower for rails *vis a vis* roads. Rail construction costs are approximately six times lower than roads for comparable levels of traffic. Rail is the only major transport more capable of using any form of primary energy."

For these reasons, in transport sector, if anybody is to be promoted, the Railways are to be promoted, and for that Railways should be helped. And if, because of stoppage or reduction in this cross subsidisation, the Railways earns more and spends more, then it will be in the national interest. In other words, the Budget is anti-inflationary because of this, and that also I welcome.

There is a hike in passenger fares. I think it is effected after three years. In every year when the Budget was presented, there was the fear of general elections. Probably, this is the first time that the Railway Minister is not afraid of any general elections. Some hike in passenger fares has been made. I will, of course, request him to give concessions, wherever they are possible, especially in the case of suburban season ticket where he should definitely think of some concession, at the time of his reply to the debate. But, at the same time, primary

expectations of the commuters should be taken care of. The first primary expectation is that the late running of trains should be stopped. They should start in time and they should reach their destination in time. Another point is about safety. When we travel by the railways we are not safe. As the hon. Minister comes from Bihar, he knows it better. So, passenger safety should be taken care of. As far as cleanliness in the railway stations and the trains is concerned, it should be taken care of. Then comes the maintenance of trains and the provision of good food. Today he had announced that as far as food is concerned, more facilities would be provided. That should be done. At the same time, water should be provided at every railway station. My request is that he should act immediately in some matters. One is track renewal. If it is not done at the proper time, it is the people who will ultimately suffer. We in Mumbai are suffering because of this reason. Track renewal is not done properly and at the proper time and, therefore, the suburban trains in the Central Railway are running late every day. Every train is late, at least, by 20 minutes. The main reason is lack of track renewal. There is saturation in some areas. It should also be taken care of.

There are some new decisions which I welcome. One is about the introduction of 24 coaches. This decision will go a long way in reducing the rush in the trains. There was a lot of criticism when the 12-car rakes were started in the suburban railways. But now there is a demand for more 12-car rakes. So, the 24-coach trains will definitely help the passengers. He has decided to spend as much as is necessary on research and development. That is also a good decision. The decision to provide medical facilities to shoeshine boys is also a welcome decision. When the Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation is formed, it will also help the suburban passengers. The decision regarding economy and austrity, which he is going to start from the above, is also a good decision. Facilities to the senior citizens are enhanced. Allowing free passage to candidates attending interviews is a good decision. Emphasis on new line doubling of lines, provideing traffic facilities, track renewals, signals and telecommunications and passenger amentities is also a good thing.

Then there is something about GRPF and SRPF. Two days ago during the Question Hour a point was raised. Hon. Shankarraoji, also mentioned that. My feeling is that you have to communicate your problems to the State Government and ultimately the State Government's help is definitely necessary to ensure safety of the passengers. One query was raised in the Status Paper whether magisterial powers could be given to the railway officers. My reply to this query is "no". These rights should not be given to the Railway officers. So far as commercial exploitation of the Railway space is concerned, the Railway Ministry is visualising it. It should be done with great care. Enough care should be taken at the Railway Stations while doing commercial exploitation of the Railway space; otherwise, there will be a lot of problems in surrounding areas.

The staff expenditure which is to the tune of 56 per cent, should come down. A separate report needs to be given about BOLT. Why has BOLT failed?

Shri S.B. Chavan made a suggestion about Marathawada, Parli Vaijnath and Ahmednagar. I would request the hon. Minister to complete the survey of Daryaghat which starts from Kalyan and from Kalyan it goes to Murbad and from Murbad it goes to Ahmednagar. We are already expecting a new train from Ahmednagar to Parli. If Kalyan and Ahmednagar are linked, then a lot of saving will be done. I support the suggestions made by Shri S.B. Chavan in this regard. Many new things have come up. I welcome this budget. I have made some suggestions. I hope the hon. Minister will take into account all the suggestions which I have made. thank you.

SHRI C.O. POULOSE (Kerala) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I thank you for allowing me to speak on the Railway Budget. This is my maiden speech in this august House. The Status Paper as well as the Railway Budget show us the direction in which the Government leads the Indian Railways.

The Indian Railway which is employing 16 lakh people and carrying 1.2 million tonnes of goods and 1.1 million passengers per day is one of the major traffic establishments in the world.

It handled 80 per cent of the passenger traffic and 89 per cent of goods traffic in the country in 1950-51. But now the percentage has come down. The percentage has dropped to a mere 20 per cent of passenger traffic and 40 per cent of goods traffic.

What should be our national goal regarding the Railways? can it be allowed to shrink even from its 'not-so-happy position'?

Our aim should be to move forward to have a share of 40 per cent of passenger traffic and 60 per cent of goods traffic. This target was fixed by one of the Parliamentary Committees. To achieve this target we need to expand it at an accelearated speed. We should find out necessary resources. It is the duty of the Government to find out necessary resources.

The National Agenda of the ruling front promises that they will give a major thrust to infrastructure development by augmenting public expenditure in this sector. They have also promised that they would mobilise long term funds both from national and international markets besides removing administrative bottlenecks.

If this statement reflects the actual mind of the Government then there is no need for fear of shortage of funds.

It is porposed that uneconomic routes are going to be done away with and extension of the Railways will be done on the basis of viability, i.e. profit. It shows that there is going to be a drastic change in the policy and the development of the Indian Railway system will take a backward turn rather than going forward.

In a vast country like India where rail communication is still absent in many parts, who will undertake this job? The United Front Government's policy of taking Railways to the North-East is going to be scuttled. I want to know from the Minister as to what the policy is towards development of railways in the North-East.

Sir, I find that the Government has not provided adequate funds. The proposal made is to borrow money from public market which, in the present circumstances, is not easy to achieve. Therefore, the expansion of railways, which had been promised, is going to be adversely affected. There are enough points in these documents to show that the Government is intending to close down many of the local or regional train services which are making losses. It intends to concentrate on the main trunk lines connecting big cities. If this is done, most of the villages and backward areas will be out of the railway map.

The Indian Railway has developed, through its long period of existence, an all-India out look but I am sorry to state that the Railways is giving it up now. Take, for example, my State of Kerala. Kerala has already given Rs. 48 crores to the Konkan Railway Corporation as the State Government's share. For deriving full benefits of the Konkan Railway line for the people of Kerala, the doubling work of the Shoranur-Mangalore line should be completed immediately. But only Rs. 40 crores against the requirement of Rs. 400 crores is being provided. The Kozhikode-Mangalore line has 220 kms. of length. As the Konkan Railway has started its full-fledged functions and a good number of trains have been diverted to this route, trains are running hours and hours late in Kerala because of the single line constraint. For the doubling of the Guruvayoor-Kuttipuram line, a token sum of Rs. 10 lakhs only has been provided. The requirement is Rs. 30 crores. For the Kottayam-Erumeli and Angamally-Shabarimala lines, only Rs. 10,000 each have been provided. For the former, the investment may be in the region of Rs. 200 crores and for the latter it is about Rs. 550 crores. The Quilon-Trivandrum doubling work needs Rs. 11.5 crores more. The electrification of Cochin-Trivandrum line does not find favour with the Railways Minister. Along the NH-17 in the northern districts of Kerala, there exist more than 17 level-crossings. Because of the increase in the traffic pressure, these railway gates have to be closed for long durations. As a result, the hardship of the travelling public is increasing. Then, the train which was allowed to Kerala, that is, the Mangala Express from Delhi to Mangalore, is being diverted via Konkan, not touching the State of Kerala. I am compelled to say that no Central Government in the past has been so cruel to the State of Kerala. Keralites are the most long distance travelling people of India because of its gropraphical

position. They have to bear the most shameful humiliation. Big grants, concessions, subsidies, tax de-ductions and other benefits were granted to the well-to-do sections of society in the past years in the name of economic policy. In the last financial year, these concessions cost the exchequer a sum of Rs. 14,025 crores. I want that the Government should reverse the policies. What the Government should do is that it should spend the money for the benefit of the weaker sections of the people who constitute 90 per cent of the Indian population. For this, the Government should provide necessary funds for public sector enterprises and railways. There are grievances amongst railway employees which need urgent redressal. The railway employees especially the technical staff and the running staff are the backbone of the railways.

Sir, before I conclude, I must tell the hon. Railway Minister that he must change the policies declared. In the case of Kerala, development of railways in Kerala should be given priority and it should be provided with required funds. I also demand that the increased charges imposed on the lower-class passengers must be withdrawn.

SHRI S.S. SURJEWALA (Haryana): Mr. Vice-Chairperson, Sir, I was prevented by the police because they said the Prime Minister was moving.

SHRI MD. SALIM (West Bengal): Was there no signal available?

SHRI S.S. SURJEWALA: I was kept waiting for 15 mintues.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Anyway, you can start now. You are on time for the debate.

SHRI S.S. SURJEWALA: Actually, I want to speak briefly on the Railway Budget. For the last four years I have raised the issue of Northern States like Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh and other areas. I demanded certain things like a new railway line particularly. In the first instance I would like to mention to the new Railway Minister who appears to be very young and straightforward, I have great hope that what the Railway Ministers before could not accomplish, he may do so because after two months I will be retiring and perhaps this is the last word I want to speak in this House. Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I want to address, the Minister through you that there is an area which lies between Punjab and Haryana. The area is situated between Patiala and Narwana. On the one side in the North-South and in the East-West, it is situated between Kurukshetra and Sangrur. The area consists of several thousand kilometres. It was a barren area or say it was a forest area before independence. There was no canal, no tube-well and it was only a grazing land. Ghaggar river passes through this area and after independence and after the advent of the Bhakhra Canal System which primarily is serving this area now, this is the grain bowl of both Punjab and Haryana. The best paddy variety is produced in this area. The area falls in so many tehsils and in two States. It starts from Patiala, Samana, Patran and Ghanouli in Punjab and on the other hand, areas in Haryana like Gulachika, Kaithal area and many other areas. Likewise, in Punjab upto Sangrur there are many areas. Unfortunately, after the development of more than three dozen flourishing grain markets, there is no transportation system, there is no trunk road to connect the area with the rest of the world. There is no railway line. Hundreds of miles of stretch which produces the largest number of foodgrains, wheat and paddy is without any railway line, without any Grand Trunk Road. As a result of that the farmers, the traders and the country, all the three are suffering. The grain movement is very, very difficult, the inputs like fertilisers, seeds, cement and so many things are very hard and difficult to move. It is very costly because they have to be taken by truck not from one point but it has to be changed at several points because the area falls in two States and so many districts. Therefore, I have been emphasising to the two Railway Ministers before. They had agreed to it in the House. They also provided some money for the survey etc. Survey has been done. The survey report is lying in the Railway office or the Railway Board office. I had met the Railway Minister several times. I had a personal meeting I had group meetings with the Railway Ministers. They all had agreed saying, "Yes, this is one area where the railway line should be constructed." It will

immensely benefit the country as well as the farmers, the labourers and the traders in this area.

Because of movement of foodgrains and inputs they will feel easy. Through you, Sir, I would like to request the Railway Minister kindly to dig up the files from his office or from the office of the Chairman of the Railway Board and have a favourable look.

My submission to the hon. Railway Minister is that after the Britishers quit this country, since independence, not a single track of railway line has been laid in this part of the two States, Punjab and Haryana, except a small line connecting Rohtak with Bhiwani because Bhiwani was Mr. Bansilal's place and he was the Railway Minister then. He took the railway line from Rohtak to Bhiwani which is a small stretch. No other railway line in the entire Punjab and Haryana was laid after independence. People of Punjab and Haryana very sincerely believe that this was one area in which they stand neglected because they didn't have any Railway Minister from their areas. I except it from you, Mr. Railway Minister. I am very serious when I say this. I expect it from you as the spokesperson of the downtrodden people because you belong to a State which is very, very backward. We are also socially very backward. We have foodgrains but we are not getting remunerative prices.

Another thing that I want to say through you, Mr. Chairman, is that there are two or three small links. One connecting Rewari, Jhajjar and Rohtak has already been sanctioned. It is a missing link. This is an area which has given the maximum number of people to the armed forces Hirwal area, Jhajjar area and the Rohtak area. The area has a large number of Ex-Servicemen and officers who have been decorated in all the wars. They belong to that area. This is a backward area and the missing link has already been sanctioned and approved. It has only to be executed on the ground. Then, the third one is Agroha. It is situated in Hissar. It is the birth-place of Maharaja Agrasen. A very large number of small traders migrated in search of their livelihood. They went to Calcutta and other places in Bengal. They are called Marwaris. I don't know, they are all from Haryana or parts of Rajasthan. There is a university there now. There is a medical college there. There is an engineering college there. It is also a place of pilgrimage. Marwaris from Bombay, Madras, Calcutta and other parts of the country come to this place after the marriage of their sons and daughters or on the birthdays of their children and the place has developed into a huge city now. It needs a very small link between Hissar on the one hand and on the other hand there is another sub-division town. I had already demanded it and the then Railway Minister had promised that he would provide some money for the survey. The survey is all right. But I would request that you kindly consider it. Haryana has been done great injustice since independence as far as the railways is concerned. Probably during Shri Bansilal's regime, maybe because of Shrimati Indira Gandhi's blessings, a railway workshop for the construction of railway wagons was actually set up somewhere at Bhiwani or Hissar. Everything was completed. The survey was done. Funds were provided. The site was approved and probably land was also acquired. But Haryana is a very, very small State. It has no voice. This poor State has no voice as far as the Parliamentary functioning is concerned. We have only ten MPs but seven parties. Just imagine! And sometimes on MP is divided between two parties. (*Interruptions*) Yes, you know everything. I need not elaborate it here in this House.

So, this is the unfortunate political state of affairs in Haryana. Hence, we have no clout. The entire project was taken to Kapurthala in Punjab. We are not unhappy. Punjab is my brother. But give something to Haryana. Haryana's educated young people are committing suicides. Why don't you provide an opportunity to a few thousand people so that they can have some relief? If you do this, then they will have some succour of life. I don't want to take the valuable time of this House. I have a few other demands about which I will write a letter to you. These demands include introduction of new trains, halting of trains, changing time-table of some trains, etc. I think you can do it very easily. With these words I again emphasise please give top-priority to the connecting railway line between Patiala to

Narwana. There is already a railway line between Patiala and Rajpura, but there is no railway line beyond Rajpura to Chandigarh. Hence, Chandigarh is not on the railway map, as far as Haryana is concerned. The Railway Ministry has already sanctioned a railway line there. I think it may be under construction. On completion, it will connect Rajpura to Chandigarh. If Rajpura is connected to Chandigarh and if Patiala is connected to Narwana_Narwana to Hissar railway line is already there; there is a small missing link-then the entire Haryana and Punjab will be connected to Bombay, Ahmedabad and other parts of the country. It will boost employment opportunities in the State; it will give a boost to trade, agriculture, etc. I hope the Railways which is the biggest Government Department will be able to do these things. With these words, I thank you, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. I hope that I will have some reaction from the Railway Minister, maybe during the course of his reply. I will not be here in the House after some time, although I will be very well living and kicking. Thank you very much.

SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH (Andhra Pradesh): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I welcome the Budget presented by the Railway Minister. As far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, we are not fully satisfied with the provisions made in the Budget.

SHRI MD. SALIM: Are you supporting it or opposing?

SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: I am supporting it partly. Sir, for converting the metre-gauge line into broad-gauge the Budget has allocated some funds for the railway line between Tirupati and Katpadi, but they have forgotten the railway line between Dharmavaram and Pakala. There is a linking line where Puttaparthi Sai Baba's temple is situated. Most of the north Indian people go to that temple. Since the work between Tirupati and Katpadi is over, it is more necessary that the remaining work from Dharmavaram to Pakala should be done. Then only the purpose will be solved. Hence I request the Railway Minister to order for carrying out this work. I demand that some funds should be allocated for that.

Sir, Ananthapur district in Andhra Pradesh is a drought-prone zone. The Railway Minister was pleased to introduce a new train from Visakhapatnam to Bangalore. That train is running once a week. I request the Railway Minister to make it twice a week.

Sir, another request I would like to make to the Railway Minister is, the budgetary provisions for Andhra Pradesh should be increased as some railway stations and bridges which were damaged in terrorist activities have to be repaired. Taking consideration of these terrorist activities, I request the hon. Minister to show some sympathy towards Andhra Pradesh by giving more funds for repair of railway stations and bridges.

Sir, in Ananthapur district, Sai Baba's temple is situated. Many devotees come to Ananthapur town from north and other parts of India. I request that computerised reservation at Ananthapur town should be linked with Madras and Mumbai terminals....so that they can have reservation for all passengers who come from distant places. This is a small thing for the Minister to provide computerised reservation to link it with Chennai and Mumbai. Another thing is that there was a train earlier, known as Netravati Express from Cochin to Kurla and it was facilitating Kerala people, 3-4% who are residing in Anantapur district, who used to travel by that train. Unfortunately, attention is given to the Konkan Railway and here, most of the Kerala people are suffering a lot because of the inconvenience caused to them by cancelling Netravati Express. I request the hon. Railway Minister to think it over and restore this Express train which used to run from Kurla to Cochin. I also request the hon. Minister to look into another thing. A broad gauge line goes from Dharmavaram to Kurnool, it is almost over and is going to be started on the 2nd July. Earlier there was a train from Dharmavaram to Secunderabad. Now it is stopped because of repairs. Repairs are over now and the metre-gauge is converted into broadgauge. From Anantapur to Hyderabad, there are about 20 buses, private buses, plying. If this train is introduced, it will not only facilitate the public but also will be profitable

to the Railways also. This is my special request to the hon. Minister. Finally, I request him in the national interest that some persons who are born after 1950 and 1960 are possessing freedom-fighters' passes. Kindly investigate into it and try to cancel them. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Thank you, Mr. Saifullah for being very brief. Now I call Shri Gopalsinh Solanki. He is not here. Shri Dave now.

श्री अनन्तराय देवशंकर दवे (गुजरात): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, सब से पहले तो मैं रेल मंत्री जी को बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद देता हूं कि उन्होंने एक बहुत बढ़िया और अच्छा बजट इस हाऊस में पेश किया है। देश की तरक्की और रेलवे की तरक्की दोनों साथ जुड़ी हुई है। जब हमें नेशन का इकोनोमिक डवलपमेंट करना है, यह तब होगा जब रेलवे की तरक्की होगी। इसी वजह से हमने रेल मंत्री महोदय के समक्ष गुजरात की कुछ योजनाएं पेश की थीं। मुझे एक बात कहनी है कि गत साल 1997-98 में रेलवे ने 7 करोड़ रुपया गुजरात के लिए रखा था। इस वर्ष 10 गुना ज्यादा गुजरात को दिया है। मैं इसलिए उन लोगों को बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद देता हूं। महोदय, यह बहुत पुराना मामला है, कई सालों से बाकी पड़ा था। उसमें मिल्डी से वीरमगाम के लिए 5 करोड़ रुपया दिया, राजकोट से वीरावल के लिए 10 करोड़ दिया, भावनगर से सुरेन्द्र नगर के लिए 30 करोड़ रुपया दिया और जो एक नई रेल लाइन दी, वह मिलिटेरी के लिए और स्ट्रेटेजिक परिस्थिति की है। गांधीधाम-पालनपुर लाइन का टोकन सर्वे आपने किया है। मैं यह आशा करता हूं कि अगले साल सर्वे पूरा हो जाने के बाद इसके लिए कुछ ज्यादा प्रोविजन करेंगे। गुजरात में कच्छ डिस्ट्रिक्ट बार्डर पर है और पिछड़ा हुआ डिस्ट्रिक्ट है और इस डिस्ट्रिक्ट के लिए ज्यादा प्रावधान करना चाहिये। यह बिलमुल पाकिस्तान के बार्डर पर है। बेकवर्ड भी है। जितना ज्यादा और जल्दी यह काम होगा, गुजरात के लिए और देश के लिए उतना फायदा मिलेगा।

दूसरी बात जो मुझे कहनी है, जो महत्वपूर्ण बात है वह है कि कई वेस्ट लैंड्स-यह प्रश्न इस हाउस में पहले भी पूछा गया था-रेलवे की जमीनें हैं। कुछ पुराने रेलवे के स्टेशन्स थे वे दूसरी जगह पर चले गए हैं। उनके पास कोई प्रांतवार या डिस्ट्रिक्टवाइज फिगर्स नहीं हैं। लेकिन जो जोनलवाइज हैं वे फिगर्स मेरे पास हैं। तो सेंट्रल रेलवे की 64 एकड़ जो लैंड है वह अंडर एन्क्रोचमेंट है, अनयूटिलाइज्ड 146 है। ईस्टर्न रेलवे की 85 और अनयूटिलाइज्ड 2,600। नार्दन रेलवे की 900 एन्क्रोच हो गयी है और 1,828 अनयूटिलाइज्ड। एन.ई. की 115 और 4,560 अनयूटिलाइज्ड। वेस्टर्न रेलवे की 107 और 1,8901 दूसरे सदर्न, एम.सी., एस.ई., एन.ई., एन.एफ. सब रेलवे की जमीनें वैसे ही पड़ी हुई हैं। मैं यह कह रहा हूं कि हमारे कच्छ में जो एक भुज रेलवे स्टेशन था अभी उसे वहां से नयी जगह पर ले जाया गया है। वह जमीन जो बिल्कुल शहर के नजदीक है वह बहुत कीमती जमीन है। मैं नहीं कहता कि किसी इंडिवीजुअल को आप दे दीजिए। आप म्यूनिसपैलिटी को दीजिए, कारपोरेशन को दीजिए, स्टेट गवर्नमेंट को दीजिए या पब्लिक आक्शन करके बेच डालिए। तो इसमें से जितना पैसा रेलवे को मिलेगा तो गांधीधाम और भुज की जो 55 किलोमीटर की लाइन बनानी है उसके लिए उतना पैसा ही जरूरी है। वैसी ही जमीन जामनगर में है, पालमपुर में है, सुरेन्द्र नगर में है। किंतु जितनी जमीनें वैसे ही पड़ी हुई हैं, दिन प्रति दिन उन पर एन्क्रोचमेंट होता जा रहा है। एक बार जिस जमीन पर एन्क्रोचमेंट हो गया तो वह जमीन कभी भी खाली नहीं होती और रेलवे का पैसा चला जाएगा। मैंने यह सवाल दो-तीन बार पहले भी इस हाउस में उठाया था। मुझे लगता है कि जब रेलवे मंत्री ने इतना बढ़िया और अच्छा बजट पेश किया है तो मैं यह मानता हूं कि कोई अच्छा कदम आप लेंगे और इस दिशा में सोचकर कुछ कार्य आप आगे करेंगे। मुझे एक बात समझ में नहीं आती....(**व्यवधान**)

श्री नीलोत्पल बसु: आपके भाषण से लगता है कि वह साइड आपकी चेंज हुई है।

श्री अनन्तराय देवशंकर दवे: हां, ठीक है। यह वैसे ही अच्छा बजट आया है। बहुत अच्छा है। हमने 10 प्रोपोजल किए थे, 7 हमारे हो गए हैं। लेकिन वैसे ही वे अच्छे प्रोपोजल्स हैं। इसी वजह से हम धन्यवाद दे रहे हैं।

एक बात समझ में नहीं आई है। रेलवे के अंदर मिसलेनियस ईस्टेब्लिशमेंट बहुत है। आपने जो यह इयर्ली रिपोर्ट दी है उसमें 23 जगहों पर रेलवे के अलग-अलग ईस्टब्लिशमेंट्स हैं। एक बात रेलवे मंत्री जी जवाब देने के वक्त में मुझे बताएंगे कि उन्होंने आफिशियल रेलवे एडवाइजर्स जो लन्दन, पैरिस, बम्बई आदि कई जगहों पर रखे हुए हैं, मुझे पढ़कर यह समझ में नहीं आता कि वे वहां क्या कर रहे हैं। कई सालों से वहां हैं, क्या उनका काम है और किस तरीके से वे काम कर रहे हैं। जब जवाब देंगे तब इस मुद्दे का भी जवाब देंगे ऐसा मेरा अनुरोध है।

दूसरी बात जो मैं कहना चाहता हूं यह है कि रेलवे की एक कंपनी प्राइवेट कंस्ट्रक्शन का काम इस देश में और प्रदेशों में कर रही है। कमेटी ने भी एक जगह पर आब्जर्व किया है कि जब वह कंपनी देश में काम करती है तो वहां

टेंडर क्यों नहीं भरती। ऐसा आब्जरवेशन किया गया कि यहां पर जो टेंडर इश्यू होते हैं वे जोनल लेबिल पर होते हैं और जोनल लेविल पर जो टेंडर इश्यू होते हैं उनके जो रेट्स हैं वे लोअर रहते है। इसी वजह से रेलवे की वह कंपनी टेंडर नहीं भरती। ऐसा एक स्टैंडिंग कमेटी की रिपोर्ट में आब्जरवेशन दिया गया। मुझे लगता है कि आप इस बात में भी कुछ प्रकाश डालेंगे कि अपनी ही कंपनी, अपने ही देश में क्यों काम न करे। इसकी कोई वजह आपके पास हो तो आप जरूर बताने की कृपा करेंगे।

जहां तक एक्सीडेंट का सवाल है, सेफ्टी का सवाल है, बड़ा एक्सीडेंट हो जाता है, 1996 से 1997 तक 28 एक्सीडेंट्स हुए हैं, उनमें से जिसकी डेथ हो जाती है उसको आप चार हजार रुपया देते हैं, जिसको इंजरी हो जाती है उसको पन्द्रह सौ रुपये देते हैं, लेकिन जिसको सिंपल इंजरी होती है उसको आप कुछ भी नहीं देते हैं। मेरा एक सुझाव है कि रेलवे की भूल के लिए, रेलवे के कसूर के लिए, क्योंकि रेलवे के कसूर से जब एक्सीडेंट हुआ है और सिंपल इंजरी हुई है तो उनको कुछ न कुछ सिंपैथी का लैटर भी देना चाहिए।

दूसरी बात कांधला पोर्ट ट्रस्ट की है। जिस दिन मैंने सवाल पूछा था तो उसी दिन बजट आया। कांधला पोर्ट ट्रस्ट ने जब इस साल इस देश में सब से बड़ मुनाफा किया है और उन्होंने ऑफर भी की है कि हम रेलवे के साथ भागीदारी में कुछ पैसा खर्च करने के लिए तैयार हैं, क्योंकि कांधला से पूरी इंटर लाइन में राजस्थान, मध्य प्रदेश, हरियाणा, पंजाब, उत्तर प्रदेश वहां से जो इंपोर्ट-एक्सपोर्ट होता है वह सब कांधला से होकर जाता है और बीच में जो थोड़ा टुकड़ा बाकी रह गया है बिटवीन गांधीधाम एंड पालमपुर और कांधला पोर्ट ट्रस्ट ने कागज लिखकर भी आपको रेलवे मंत्रालय को दिया है, तो मैं मानूंगा कि आपने एक लाख रुपये का अभी जो प्रोविज़न किया है उसमें यह रकम बढ़ा कर कुछ ज्यादा काम उस लाइन पर इस साल हो सके और कांधला पोर्ट को साथ में जोड़ कर यह लाइन जल्द से जल्द पूरी हो जाए तो यह अपनी आर्मी के लिए, देश की सुरक्षा के लिए यह लाइन बड़ी जरूरी है। आप जब जवाब देंगे तो मैं मानूंगा और आप कुछ इस बारे में भी सोच कर बतायेंगे।

तीसरी बात जो मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि स्टैंडिंग कमेटी रिपोर्ट में रेलवे की प्रापर्टी की डेमेजज़ और थैफ्ट की गई बाते की गई हैं मुझे दुख के साथ कहना है कि हमारे इस हाउस के एक मैम्बर राघव जी जब सैशन अटैंड करने आते थे तब उनका एक बैग, अभी वह मुझे बता रहे थे कि ए.सी. कोच में मुसाफिरी कर रहे थे और उनकी बैग थैफ्ट हो गई। उन्होंने कुछ कंप्लेंट भी रेलवे को की है। मैं कह इसलिए रहा हूं कि सामान्य आदमी की क्या स्थिति होगी? रेलवे प्रापर्टी को डेमेज भी बहुत होता है, चोरी भी बहुत होती है, लेकिन सुरक्षा के लिए पुलिस तंत्र को ज्यादा मजबूत बनाना चाहिए, ऐसा भी मेरा एक सुझाव है।

रेलवे की आमदनी इस साल बढ़ेगी। रेलवे ने बहुत अच्छी योजनाएं, इलैक्ट्रीफिकेशन के काम, नई पटरी बिछाने का काम, गेज कंवर्शन का काम, सारी जो बातें कहीं हैं तो मैं इस बजट को हृदयपूर्वक चाहता हूं और मुझे आशा है कि ये दोनों मंत्री हैं, इस साल जो नई जितनी योजनाएं आपने बनाई हैं, उन सब को आप पूर्ण करेंगे, ऐसा मुझे पूरा विश्वास है। धन्यवाद।

SHRI SANATAN BISI (Orissa): Thank you, Sir. From the day I joined the Rajya Sabha, I have been demanding for the completion of Talcher Sambhalpur rail link but till now it has not been completed. In the 'Budget at a Glance' it was clearly mentioned that the target date of completion is 31st March, 1998. In the same Report, it was mentioned about the allotment of additional funds to the tune of Rs. 2.47 crores during the current financial year, but till now it has not been done. Sir, I would like to submit before the House a glaring instance. I wrote a letter to the Ex-Railway Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, on 2nd September, 1997, and the reply given was, "I have examined the position of the work on this line. The work is in progress on war-footing and we are very happy of completing the same within the current financial year. I hope, you will kindly appreciate the position." But, so far it has not been completed.

Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput, in the western part of Orissa, are backward regions. Railway lines in the State of Orissa are not up to the expectations of the people. This time provision has been made again to complete Sambalpur Talcher Rail Link Project. But, we want an assurance from the hon. Minister that by such and such date this project would be completed. For the last many years the same provisions are being made. So, we would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards this. We would also like a specific reply from him, stating by which date this project would be completed because it is more or less nearing completion.

Then, I take Koraput-Rayagada Rail Link Project. This project was inaugurated by the then hon. Prime Minister in December 1995. But, till now passenger services have not been introduced. The people of the State are demanding an express train from Bhubaneswar to Koraput. This demand has been accepted by the hon. Minister, but a train has yet to be introduced.

Then, so far as Daitari-Banpani Rail Link Project is concerned, it was sanctioned in 1992-93. The State Government is committed to provide all categories of land free of cost for construction of this railway line. So, in order to ensure completion of this line well in time budgetary allocations must be substantially hiked. The project has been delayed due to inadequate funds.

The Haridaspur-Paradip Rail Line Project was sanctioned in the year 1979. Adequate funds must be available every year for an early completion of this project.

Then, the East Coast Railway Project was inaugurated in the year 1976. It is a new zone. It constitutes three divisions -- Waltair, Khurda Road and Sambalpur. We demand that a gazette notification should immediately be made in this regard.

So far as Rajdhani Express is concerned, we demand that it should be thrice a week instead of twice a week.

So far as other neglected areas of Orissa are concerned, we demand that a direct train from Sambalpur to Bombay should be introduced. Several representations have been made in this regard, but to no effect. Sir, who is noting down all these things? The Minister is not present here.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Shri Ram Naik has left the House with the permission of the Chair. He was having a meeting with the hon. Prime Minister. Shri George Fernandes is here. He is a former Railway Minister. He is very much acquainted with all these things

SHRI SANATAN BISI: O.K., Sir. So far as the State of Orissa is concerned, special attention should be paid towards it by the Ministry, so that economic development of the State could be ensured. So, I need clarifications in respect of the projects stated by me. Thank you very much.

SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH (Manipur): Sir, our problem is very serious. But the hon. Minister is not present here. of course, hon. Defence Minister is here and he belongs to the same party, but I do not think that the actual work would be done by him. Therefore, I would not like to participate in this discussion.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Mr. Ram Naik has left the house with the permission fo the Chair. Here is a note saying, "Mr. Ram Naik has to attend a meeting with the hon. Prime Minister." But, Shri George Fernandes is present here. He is noting down all the points. I think, you can continue. Then, your reply also is not going to be today.

SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Sir as far as my participation is concerned it is mainly for the North Eastern Region. In this Budget the North Eastern Region has been totally neglected. Hence, all that I wanted to know from the hon. Minister is that in what way he is going to take up the matter relating to the North Eastern Region. The discontentment that has created the militant activities in the North Eastern Region may come down by means of railways. That is why I wanted to bring this matter to the notice of the concerned Minister.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Mr. Singh, you can start the debate. They will note down the points and the reply will be given tomorrow or on Monday. I do not think it is very relevant. I am not against what you are saying. But the hon. Minister of State, Mr. Ram Naik, has given me a note. *(interruptions)*. He said that there is a meeting with the hon. Prime Minister which he was to attend. He may come at any time.

SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: I have no objection to it. But the point is that it is better to raise when the concerned Minister is here because the problem of the N.E. States is different from the problem of the bigger States. This problem is mainly concerned with the North Eastern Region. In this Budget the N.E. States have been totally neglected. That is why I do not want to participate in this discussion.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): If he does not want to speak I cannot force him to speak.

श्री गोविन्दराम मिरी (मध्य प्रदेश): उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, इस रेलवे बजट से खासकर के जो हमारे छत्तीसगढ़ के निवासी हैं, जहां से हम लोग आते हैं, उन्हें काफी निराशा हुई है छत्तीसगढ़ को हम एक अलग राज्य बनाने जा रहे हैं और हरेक राज्य की जो राजधानी है वह देश की राजधानी दिल्ली से तीव्रगामी रेलगाड़ी से जुड़ी हुई है, लेकिन दुर्भाग्य यह है कि बिलासपुर और रायपुर के लिए यहां से कोई तीव्रगामी यात्री गाड़ी नहीं है । हमको यहां से वहां पहुंचने में 24 से 30 घंटे का समय लगता है। एक तरफ तो भोपाल जैसे जो शहर हैं उनके लिए नई रेलगाड़ियां दी गई हैं, जहां कि पूर्व से ही कई रेलगाड़ियां चल रही हैं, मगर वहीं दूसरी ओर जो पिछड़ा क्षेत्र है, जो रेलवे को सर्वाधिक आमदनी देने वाला क्षेत्र है, जहां कोयले की अनेक खदान हैं, माल लदान अधिक होता है, जहां स्टील प्लांट हैं, अनेक कारखाने हैं, उस क्षेत्र की उपेक्षा की गई है। मैं चाहता हूं कि जब रेल मंत्री जी अपना जवाब दें तो उसमें इस क्षेत्र के लिए कोई नई तीव्रगामी रेल यात्री गाड़ी चलवाने की घोषणा करें।

महोदय, बिलासपुर में रेलवे जोन की मांग एक अरसे से चली आ रही है और रेलवे जोन बनाने के लिए जितने मापदंड या औपचारिकताएं होती हैं उन सारे मापदंडों को, औपचारिकताओं को पूरा करने के बावजूद भी बिलासपुर में रेलवे जोन की स्थापना न करना हमारे अधिकारों पर एक कुठाराघात है। वर्ष 1966 के बाद जितने भी रेल मंत्री हुए, सबने यही आश्वासन दिया कि नौ के बाद दसवां रेलवे जोन जब भी खुलेगा तो वह बिलासपुर में खुलेगा, लेकिन हुआ इसका उल्टा। बिलासपुर में तो रेलवे जोन खुलने से रहा, कई अन्य जगहों पर, कि रेलवे रिफार्मस कमेटी ने सिफारिश भी नहीं की थी ऐसे स्थानों पर यानि जिसमें भुवनेश्वर और हाजीपुर सम्मिलित है, वहां रेलवे जोन खुल गए हैं।

पेज 5

आज रेलवे ज़ोन की मांग को लेकर वहां पर लोगों में काफी रोष प्रकट हो रहा है और यहां तक कि वहां की युवा छात्र संघर्ष समिति के सदस्य 100-200 की संख्या में यहां जन्तर-मंतर पर आमरण-अनशन पर बैठे हुए हैं। कल ही उनमें से दो की हालत खराब हो गई थी और उन्हें अस्पताल भेजा गया। मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि उनकी मांग वास्तविक है। हमारे वर्तमान प्रधान मंत्री, श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी और गृह मंत्री, श्री लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी जी चाम्पा रेलवे दुर्घटना के बाद जब बिलासपुर घायलों को देखने गए थे तो घायलों ने अपना दर्द भूलकर उनको यही कहा था कि साहब, अब हमको बिलासपुर जोन मिल जाएगा? मैं यही बताना चाहता हूं कि वहां पर रेलवे ज़ोन की मांग की तीव्रता कितनी है। बिलासपुर, जितने भी ज़ोन है, उनमें सर्वाधिक आमदनी देने वाला डिवीज़न है और उसके साथ हमेशा छलावा होता आया है। हम लगातार इस बारे में, वहां के जो सांसद हैं, रेल मंत्री जी से सम्पर्क करते आ रहे हैं, प्रधान मंत्री जी से भी मिले हैं, लेकिन हमें अभी तक निराशा ही हाथ लगी है। मैं माननीय रेल मंत्री जी का ध्यान रेलवे संबंधी स्थाई समिति का 1977-98 का जो 11वां प्रावधान है, उसमें जिन बातों की ओर ध्यान दिलाया गया है, मैं पुन: उनकी ओर रेल मंत्री जी का ध्यान दिलाना चाहता हूं। इसमें पैरा 14 में कहा गया है:-

"समिति रेलवे मंत्रालय के उत्तर से सहमत नहीं है। समिति मंत्रालय द्वारा उन मूल कारणों, जिनके आधार पर रेल सुधार समिति व सलाहकार समिति द्वारा चार ज़ोनों के सृजन की सिफारिश के विपरीत छ: ज़ोनों का सृजन व निर्माण किया था, के न बता पाने पर गहन चिंता व्यक्त करती है।"

रेलवे सुधार समिति जो बनी थी, उसकी रिपोर्ट के आधार पर जो कारण बताए गए थे, उसमें था:-

"कार्यभार का बेहतर संचालन, कुशलता और प्रभावी नीति तथा प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था को ध्यान में रखकर ज़ोनों की स्थापना की जानी चाहिए थी।"

जहां तक बिलासपुर का संबंध है, महोदय, जितने भी मापदंड हैं, उन सबमें बिलासपुर खरा उतरता है और मैं इस बारे में कुछ अधिक न कहते हुए इतना ही कहना चाहता हूं कि इस संबंध में जो रिपोर्ट्स दी गई हैं, उन रिपोर्ट्स को वे ध्यान में रख लें और यहां तक कि जो स्थाई समिति है, उसको दस्तावेज़, जब वे जांच करने जा रहे थे, तो उन्हें दस्तावेज़ तक उपलब्ध नहीं कराए गए, उन्होंने इसका स्वरूप गोपनीय होने का बहाना बनाया। इस बारे में भी समिति ने काफी चिंता व्यक्त की है और यह कहा है कि:-

"सलाहकार समिति की रिपोर्ट उपलब्ध न कराना भी समिति की अवहेलना करने के बराबर है।"

मैं चाहता हूं कि जो ज़ोन बनाए गए हैं, उनकी पुन: समीक्षा की जाए और यदि समीक्षा नहीं की जाती है तो जो ज़ोन घोषित किए गए हैं, उस पर हमें कोई प्रतिवाद नहीं करना है, लेकिन हमारा जो हक है उसको नज़रअंदाज करके ज़ोन नहीं खोले जाएं। इस साल नया ज़ोन तो नहीं

खोला गया है इसीलिए मैं मांग कर रहा हूं कि छत्तीसगढ़ जैसा महत्वपूर्ण स्थान, जिसको राज्य बनाया जा रहा है, वहां बिलासपुर को नया रेलवे ज़ोन बनाया जाए। बिलासपुर में, महोदय, रेलवे ज़ोन का मिलना तो दूर रहा, बिलासपुर डिविजन को दो भागों में बाइफरकेट कर दिया गया - रायपुर को अलग कर दिया गया और बिलासपुर को अलग कर दिया गया। जबकि समिति ने सिफारिश की थी कि बिलासपुर में जो उलासपुर स्थान है, उसमें एक डिवीज़न बनाया जाए। तो मेरा रेल मंत्री जी से अनुरोध है कि बिलासपुर में शीघ्र ही एक नया रेलवे ज़ोन बनाने की घोषणा वे करें। वहां की विधान सभा ने सर्वसम्पत्ति से इस संबंध में एक प्रस्ताव भी पारित करके भेजा है, वहां के मुख्य मंत्री भी आए थे और इस पर कोई विवाद नहीं है। इसलिए मैं चाहता हूं कि रेल मंत्री जी बिलासपुर में शीघ्र ही एक नया रेलवे ज़ोन बनाने की घोषणा करें।

महोदय, इसके अलावा मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि बिलासपुर से मुंगेली, मंडला होते हुए जबलपुर तक रेलवे लाइन खोलने के लिए सर्वे बरसों पूर्व हुई थी। हम जब बच्चे थे, तब सुनते थे, लेकिन अभी इस रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि राजनांद गाव से जबलपुर तक सर्वे कराने का विचार है। मैं चाहता हूं कि इसके साथ ही बिलासपुर से मुंगेली, मंडला होकर जबलपुर तक का जो सर्वे हुआ था, चाहें तो उसका आप फिर से सर्वे करा लें और उसको कार्यरूप में परिणत करें।

महोदय, डोंगरगढ़ से चक्रधरपुर तक की रेलवे लाईन और अनूपपुर से बिलासपुर तक की रेलवे लाईन बहुत पुरानी हैं वहां आएं दिन गाड़ी गिरने की घटनाएं होती रहती है। पिछले साल चम्पा से भयंकर रेल दुर्घटना हुई थी। महोदय, मैं कह रहा हूं कि बिलासपुर डिवीजन सर्वाधिक आमदनी देने वाला डिवीजन है। कमाई वह करता है लेकिन उसके अनुपात में उस पर खर्च नहीं होता है। यह जो अंतर है, यह जो भेदभावपूर्ण नीति है, उसको बंद करना चाहिए और इन दुर्घटनाओं को रोका जाना चाहिए। गाड़ियों में चोरियां आए-दिन हो रही हैं, लूटपाट और डकैतियां हो रही हैं। हम इस मामले को केवल राज्य शासन पर नहीं छोड़ सकते। रेलवे की यात्रा के लिए जब हम किराया वसूल करते हैं तो रेलवे की ओर से सुरक्षा की गारंटी और यात्रियों की जान और माल की रक्षा करने का दायित्व रेलवे का हो जाता है।

महोदय, अभी पिछले दिनों हमारे राज्यसभा सदस्य श्री राघवजी 26 तारीख को विदिशा से भोपाल आ रहे थे जी. टी. एक्सप्रैस से जो बड़ी प्रामिनैंट ट्रेन है। उस गाड़ी में ए. सी. 2 टियर में उनका सूटकेस चोरी हो गया। जब ए.सी. 2 टियर में यह हालत है तो बाकी डिब्बों में क्या हालत होगी, इसका अंदाजा आप लगा सकते हैं।

महोदय, चलती गाड़ी में चिकित्सा सुविधा उपलब्ध कराने के बारे में मंत्री जी ने कोई उल्लेख नहीं किया है अपने बजट भाषण में। कई बार ऐसा दृश्य देखने में आता है कि यात्रा के दौरान यात्रियों को गाड़ी से उतरकर चिकित्सक के पास जाना पड़ता है या फिर चिकित्सा के अभाव में उनकी मृत्यु हो जाती है। इस ओर भी ध्यान देना चाहिए।

महोदय, गाड़ियों में पीने के पानी की व्यवस्था भी अपर्याप्त है। कई बार हम देखते हैं कि गरमी के दिनों में जहां पीने का पानी है, वहां भीड़ लग जाती है और पानी लेने की होड़ में झगड़ा हो जाता है और कई बार यात्रियों की गाड़ी भी छूट जाती है। इसलिए पीने के पानी की पर्याप्त व्यवस्था गाड़ियों में ही होनी चाहिए।

महोदय, रेलवे में खान-पान की व्यवस्था भी खास अच्छी नहीं है। कई गाड़ियों में खान-पान की व्यवस्था का ठेका निजी ठेकेदारों को दे दिया गया है। वे यात्रियों की परवाह नहीं करते और न समय पर ऑर्डर लेते हैं, न खाना-पीना सप्लाई करते हैं इसी तरह से बैड-रोल्स का काम भी कई ठेकेदारों को दे दिया गया है। वे यात्रियों को पूरी सामग्री उपलब्ध नहीं कराते हैं, उसमें सफाई भी नहीं रहती है और वे गंदे रहते हैं जिससे बीमारियां फैलती हैं। इसलिए बैड-रोल्स के काम में साफ-सफाई रखी जानी चाहिए ताकि यात्रियों को सुविधा हो।

महोदय, प्लेटफार्म टिकट अब 3 रुपए का कर दिया गया है। मैं समझता हूं कि यह व्यावहारिक नहीं है। लोग वैसे भी प्लेटफार्म टिकट खरीदते नहीं है। वैसे ही प्लेटफर्म पर चले जाते हैं। उसको रोकने के लिए यह किया गया है, यह तो ठीक है लेकिन उसका कड़ाई से पालन होना चाहिए। लोग बिना टिकट खरीदे प्लेटफर्म पर चले जाते हैं और भीड़ लगा देते हैं। इसके लिए भी कुछ उपाय किया जाना चाहिए । आप ऐसी कुछ व्यवस्था करें कि सभी लोग प्लेटफर्म टिकट खरीदकर ही प्लेटफर्म में प्रवेश करें। लोग पहले 2 रुपए में नहीं खरीदते थे, अब 3 रुपए में तो और भी कम खरीदेंगे। प्लेटफर्म टिकट की बिक्री उतनी नहीं है जितनी अपेक्षा की जाती है।

महोदय, छत्तीसगढ़ में सरगुजा जो जिला है, विश्रामपुर से अंबिकापुर मुख्यालय 20 किलोमीटर दूर है। पिछले साल बताया गया था कि उसे रेलवे लाईन से जोड़ा जाएगा लेकिन इसे बजट में सम्मिलित नहीं किया गया है। वह

ऐसा क्षेत्र है जहां कोयले का भंडार है। अनेक लोग दूर-दूर के क्षेत्रों से आकर वहां काम करते हैं लेकिन उनके आने-जाने की व्यवस्था नहीं है। विश्रामपुर से अनूपपुर तक जो गाड़ी चलती है, वह 120-125 किलोमीटर तय करने के लिए 9-10 घंटे लेती है। तो लोग मजबूर होकर के अपने मोटर वाहन से या बस से इस तरह यात्रा करते है। इससे रेलवे की आमदनी पर असर होता है। माननीय मंत्री महोदय, आ गए है, मैं उनके ध्यान में पुन: यह लाना चाहता हूं कि कुल मिला करके बजट ठीक है लेकिन हमारे साथ जो अन्याय हुआ है – बिलासपुर रेलवे जोन नहीं खोला गया है, वह रेलवे जोन खोलने की घोषणा करे। मैं एक ही बात कहना चाहता हूं कि छत्तीसगढ़ एरिया वैसे शांत एरिया है। लेकिन दो साल पहले रेलवे जोन की मांग को लेकर के तथा घोषणा न होने से वहां पर काफी तोड़फोड़ हुई और रेलवे की कम से कम 200 करोड़ रुपए की सम्पत्ति का नुकसान हुआ। उसकी भरपाई अभी तक नहीं हो पाई। मैं चाहता हूं कि आने वाले दिनो में इसकी पुनरावृति न हो तथा जितने मानदंड है उन सबको ध्यान में रखते हुए बिलासपुर में रेलवे जोन की घोषणा शीघ्र करेंगे। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ में रेलवे बजट का समर्थन करते हुए अपने अधिकारों की ओर रेलवे मंत्री जी का ध्यान आकर्षित करते हुए मैं अपनी बात यहीं समाप्त करता हूं। धन्यवाद।

SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU (Meghalaya) Sir, while participating in the debate on the Railway Budget, I would like to be very brief and would like to make a few suggestions in connection with the North-East, particularly my State—Meghalaya.

The hon. Minister, in his speech has said that the Indian Railway is a symbol of national integration. Of course, it is true in general, but it is not always true to certain regions of the country. I will in a moment narrate why it is not true.

In the Status Paper it is stated that as many as 15,83,600 people are employed to run the Indian Railways and, maybe, an equal number of people are getting employment in other forms by way of running stalls at stations or by engaging in related activities. Yet, the whole of the North-East, except Assam, does not have its due share of employment. This share of employment in the Indian Railways in different forms is not available to the people of the North-East.

The hon. Minister has also mentioned in his speech a number of measures to update the Indian Railways and even additional train services that would also be introduced in certain areas, but I would like to point out that in spite of the fact that the North-Eastern region is the poorest and the most backward region in India, very little has been done or is proposed to be done to increase the economic activity of the region through the Indian Railways. A number of new lines to be constructed in the North-East appeared in the Railway Budget and in the Budget document for 1997-98, yet those proposals do not find place either in the Railway Minister's speech or in the Budget document. We, from the North-East, have demanded that the railway line from New Jalpaiguri to Guwahati should be doubled. The present railway line is overcrowded. This is the only link between the mainland and the North-East. Unless another broad-gauge track is constructed to ease the traffic, it will not help to develop the region—economically or otherwise.

Unless such a facility is provided, it is of no use to produce more than what the North-East can consume. We know that the North-East is rich in many ways, in resources. But even then the people are poor because those resources have not been exploited in a proper way. Therefore, I would again impress upon the Railway Minister to think about our proposal to double the railway line from New Jalpaiguri to Guwahati to ease the transportation of men and materials to the Region and from the Region to the rest of India.

I would also like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to a long out standing demand of the people of Meghalaya and the Government of Meghalaya for construction of a Railway Headquarters at Burnihat, Meghalaya which is only about 30 KMs from Guwahati. This proposal, in fact, finds no place in the Budget. I hope that the Government would reconsider and take necessary action to include this proposal in the current Budget for its implementation in due course of time. The Government of Meghalaya and the people living in border areas of Meghalaya and Assam border with Bangladesh have demanded for construction of one railway line from

Panchatna through Meghalaya to Silchar. If this railway line is constructed, it will not only serve the people living in border areas of India and Bangladesh, but it will also serve the whole of my State, Meghalaya, the people of Barrak Valley of Assam, Manipur, Tripura, part of Nagaland and Mizoram. It will help even the Army during the times of need. We were told that the proposal was sent to the Defence Ministry for clearance. I do hope that there would be no objection from the Defence Ministry's side because it would also help them to move their men and materials whenever necessary. This will cut short the distance by about 100 KMs because if we are to reach the Barrak Valley of Assam and other States, Tripura, Manipur, Aizwal we have to go from Guwahati to Lumding and then to Silchar which is around about way. If this line is constructed it will cut short the distance by about 100 KMs or so.

I would also like to inform the Minister that even the construction work for the proposed line which was approved and is known as Dudnoi of Assam to Dapa of Garo Hills in Meghalaya has not yet started. Meghalaya is yet to appear in the Railway map of India. It may be a surprise to many hon. Members here. But it is a fact that Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram and even Tripura, these four States have not yet appeared in the Railway map of India. The Governments in the past and political parties in the past have expressed their love and sympathy to the people of North-Eastern Region for their backwardness and their poverty, but very little has been done.

I sincerely hope that this new Government will speak little and will act more. I assure you that you can win the hearts of the people of that Region in no time. Thank you.

श्री नरेश यादव: (बिहार) उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं रेल मंत्री जी के द्वारा प्रस्तुत रेल बजट का विरोध करने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूं। महोदय, पहली बार इस रेल बजट का विरोध पूरे देश ने किया है। माननीय मंत्री जी, आपने ऐसा रेल बजट दिया है कि मामला बिहार का नहीं, मामला पूरे देश का है। जब प्लेटफार्म टिकट दो रुपये से तीन रुपये होता है तो पूरे देश के लिए होता है और जब बिहार के पूर्वोत्तर हिस्से से मजदूर कटिहार से दिल्ली मजदूरी करने आता है तो आपने उसे भी नहीं बक्शा। किस वर्ग को, किस क्लास को आपने छोड़ा है? यहां तक कि जो मजदूर 40-50 रुपये दिहाड़ी पर मजदूरी करने के लिए बिहार से आता है, उसे भी आज कटिहार से दिल्ली आने में 30 रुपये अधिक पे करना पड़ेगा। इसलिए सारे देश में इस बजट से निराशा उत्पन्न हुई है। कम से कम आपसे यह उम्मीद नहीं थी कि आप इस तरह का बजट दबाव में आकर प्रस्तुत करेंगे। पता नहीं कौन सा दबाव है, क्या है, यह तो हमसे बेहतर आप समझ सकते हैं लेकिन इस बजट से सबको निराशा हुई है। उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी का ध्यान में इस बजट पर आकर्षित करना चाहूंगा कि आपने राजनीति के तहत इस बजट का प्रस्तुतीकरण किया है क्योंकि पिछले बजट में पिछले रेल मंत्री जी ने जो कमिटमेंट किया था - इस सदन के फ्लोर पर या उस सदन के फ्लोर पर - और जो रेल बजट में बातें रखीं थीं कहीं भी उसका जिक्र आपने अपने बजट में नहीं किया है। मैं यहां तक बताना चाहूंगा कि पूर्व रेल मंत्री श्री राम विलास पासवान जी ने 31 जुलाई को इसी राज्य सभा में और 30 जुलाई को लोक सभा में कुरसेला से सहरसा, बरासता, बिहारीगंज एक नयी रेल लाइन के सर्वेक्षण के लिए स्वीकार किया था। चार नवम्बर 1996 - माननीय मंत्री महोदय, यह इश्तिहार आपके सामने है, पूरा इश्तिहार निकालकर एक सभा की, सर्वेक्षण किया, शिलान्यास किया। मंत्री महोदय, चूंकि आपका तो उनसे बहुत अच्छा रिश्ता है। बहुत तरह के मामलों में आपने उनको सहयोग किया है, वह भी आपके अच्छे सहयोगी है, हमारे तो नहीं हैं इसलिए मैं आपसे कहना चाहता हूं कि आपसे कहीं न कहीं मतलब, पूर्व रेल मंत्री श्री पासवान जी का रहा है इसलिए उन्होंने जो कमिटमेंट किया.....

रेल मंत्री (श्री नीतिश कुमार): आपसे भी है।

श्री नरेश यादव: हमसे तो नहीं है। इसलिए जो कमिटमेंट किया, जो बात उन्होंने कही, कम से कम उसे तो पूरा कीजिए। किस आधार पर, आप अच्छी तरह से जानते हैं कि हमारा इलाका कितना उपेक्षित है। आजादी के बाद, सन् 1947 के बाद आज तक उस इलाके के लोगों ने जो कुरसेला से रुपौली, भवानीपुर, बिहारीगंज, सहरसा को जाते हैं, उन्होंने रेल नहीं देखी है। आज गांव में रहने वाला गरीब आदमी जो नदी के किनारे रहता है, वह इतनी अधिक उपेक्षा का शिकार है कि आप स्वयं इस बात को अच्छी तरह से समझ सकते हैं, जान सकते हैं। लेकिन उसका कहीं जिक्र नहीं है। आज एक वर्ष से अधिक हो गया है, कहीं उसका नामोनिशान नहीं है। हम यह आग्रह करना चाहते हैं कि उसके बाद उन्होंने कमिटमेंट किया कि जोगमनी से मनिहारी तक जो छोटी रेल लाइन है, उसका

गेज कनवर्शन करेंगे। आज तक उसकी कहीं कोई चर्चा नहीं की जब कि नेपाल का बॉर्डर लगा हुआ है।

नेपाल से हमारे काफी यात्री बिहार में आते हैं, हिन्दुस्तान में आते हैं, दिल्ली में इलाज के लिए आते हैं। उनके लिए एक छोटा सा काम करना है कि जोगबनी से लेकर के मनिहारी तक की छोटी लाइन को बड़ी लाइन में बदलना है उसका भी आपने कहीं जिक्र नहीं किया है जबकि इसके बारे में कमिटमेंट पिछले बजट में हुआ है। उसी तरह से किशनगंज से गलगलिया तक की भी कहीं कोई चर्चा बिहार के बारे में नहीं हुई हैं। आपने पूरे देश के बारे में सोचा है, अच्छी बात है लेकिन बिहार की उपेक्षा क्यों हुई है, बिहार की उपेक्षा का क्या कारण बनता है? क्या आप यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि इस तरह से क्यों होता है?

माननीय मंत्री जी बिहार से एक रेल गाड़ी महानंदा एक्सप्रेस चलती है और 1984 में यह गाड़ी चलनी शुरू हुई। इस महानंदा एक्सप्रेस में ज्यादातर मजदूर ही यात्रा करते हैं और उन मजदूरों की उसमें जो दुर्दशा होती है उसको आप बेहतर जानते हैं। उस गाड़ी के डिब्बे में 96 यात्रियों के बैठने की केपेसिटी है लेकिन उसमें पांच-पांच सौ मजदूर जानवरों की तरह ठूंसे जा रहे हैं। जब कोई मजदूर मजदूरी करके जालन्धर से या लुधियाना से या दिल्ली से बिहार की ओर चलता है तो उसका सामान रेल पर यात्रा के समय ही छीन लिया जाता है, उसके पास टिकट के रहते हुए भी। गाड़ी में कोई बिना टिकट नहीं चलता है, उनके पास टिकट रहता है और उनका टिकट लेकर के कहा जाता है कि हमें आपका टिकट देखना है और उनका टिकट गायब कर दिया जाता है, वे लोग जानते हैं कि ये काम करके जा रहा है और उसका सारा पैसा ऐंठ लिया जाता है, सारी कमाई जो दिल्ली, पंजाब, हरियाणा में मजदूर कमा कर लाता है और वह अपने घर खाली हाथ लौटता है। जिस डिब्बे में मजदूर यात्रा करते हैं उस डिब्बे में पीने के लिए पानी नहीं होता है। मैंने खुद उस डिब्बे में यात्रा की है जिसमें मजदूर यात्रा करता है। वहां पर पीने के पानी की व्यवस्था नहीं होती है। जब गाड़ी कटिहार से बरौनी चलती है तो बरौनी के बाद पीने के लिए पानी गर्मी के दिनों में नसीब नहीं होता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि पानी न मिलने के क्या कारण है जब कि गाड़ी बड़े-बड़े जंक्शनों पर रुकती है? क्यों मजदूरों को इस तरह से सताया जाता है, मजदूरों के साथ क्यों अन्याय हो रहा है? इस पर हमें गम्भीरता से सोचना पड़ेगा।

माननीय मंत्री महोदय से मैं और भी आग्रह करना चाहता हूं कि बिहार सिर्फ बरौनी तक नहीं है। बरौनी से ढाई सौ किलो मीटर आगे, किशनगंज के भी आगे बिहार है। जो भी बातें होती हैं, जो भी गाड़ियां चलती हैं उन गाड़ियों को बरौनी तक चलाया जाता है जबकि ढाई सौ किलो मीटर आगे और भी बिहार है। कटिहार रेल मंडल का मुख्यालय है। वहां से सिर्फ एक महानंदा एक्सप्रेस ही दिल्ली के लिए आती है और एक केपिटल एक्सप्रेस पटना जो बिहार की राजधानी है वहां के लिए आती है। माननीय मंत्री जी मैं आपको बताना चाहता हूं कि 3246 डाउन दानापुर-कटिहार एक्सप्रेस एक वर्ष में 11 महीने विलम्ब से चलती है। यह एक रिकार्ड है। आपने अपने बजट में कहा है कि हम समय पालन का ख्याल रखेंगे। यह जो दानापुर-कटिहार एक्सप्रेस वर्ष में 11 महीने विलम्ब से चलती है क्या आप इसको समय पर चलायेंगे? इस गाड़ी को कटिहार सुबह छह बजे पहुंचना होता है लेकिन यह दिन में 12 बजे, 10 बजे से पहले वहां कभी नहीं पहुंचती है। क्या यही समय पालन है? उस गाड़ी के आधे डिब्बों में अंधेरा रहता है और आधे डिब्बों में प्रकाश रहता है। इस गाड़ी के डिब्बों की हालत बहुत खस्ता है इसीलिए मैं आपसे आग्रह करना चाहता हूं कि आप रेल की दुर्दशा में सुधार कीजिए।

माननीय मंत्री जी आपने रेल गाड़ियों को बढ़ाया है। क्या आप यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि आपने पैसेन्जर डिब्बों को भी बढ़ाया है? जिस गाड़ी पर बड़े-बड़े आदमियों को चलना है, पैसे वालों को चलना है, व्यापारियों को चलना है उनके लिए डिब्बे तो आपने बढ़ाये हैं, वातानुकूलित डिब्बे बढ़ाये हैं लेकिन जिस पर मजदूर, गरीब चलता है वह डिब्बे रेल से घटे हैं। जो भी गाड़ियां बढ़ाई हैं, अगर गाड़ी 18-18 डिब्बों की है तो आपने उसको घटाकर 9-9 डिब्बों की गाड़ी बनाई है। उसमें आपने डिब्बों की संख्या नहीं बढ़ाई है, आपने गाड़ियों का बढ़ाया है इससे असुविधा यात्रियों को उतनी ही है जितनी कल थी। यह असुविधा आम मजदूरों को, आम यात्रियों को जो रेल से यात्रा कर रहे हैं उन्हें भुगतनी पड़ रही है। इसीलिए मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से इस पर ध्यान देने के लिए निवेदन करूंगा कि यह काम अतिशीघ्र किया जाए जिससे यात्री परेशानी से बच सके।

महोदय, पिछली बार भी मैंने आग्रह किया था कि जो छोटे व्यापारी हैं, सब्जी बेचने वाला, दूध बेचने वाला, फल बेचने वाला वे लोग गांव से शहर के जो जिला मुख्यालय हैं या बड़े-बड़े शहर हैं वहां जाते हैं उनके लिए रेल गाड़ी में कोई अलग से वेंडर डिब्बा ने लगने के कारण से काफी विवाद हो जाता है, संघर्ष हो जाता है। संघर्ष का कारण बन जाता है, यात्रियों के बीच विवाद हो जाता है जिससे काफी परेशानी हो जाती है, रेल को रोकना पड़ता है, हड़ताल

हो जाती है और रेल का चक्का जाम हो जाता है महज एक छोटे से कारण की वजह से। जो गरीब अपनी सब्जी बेचने के लिए, मछली बेचने के लिए और दूध बेचने के लिए जाता है उसके लिए क्या आप डिब्बे नहीं लगायेंगे? मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह आग्रह करना चाहूंगा कि ऐसी रेलगाड़ियां जो जिला मुख्यालय और राजधानी से जोड़ती हैं उनमें बहुत बड़ी संख्या में गरीब आदमी अपनी खेती की पैदाइश सब्जी बेचने के लिए जाते हैं उनके लिए आप उचित व्यवस्था करें जिससे वह आम यात्री राहत महसूस कर सके।

महोदय, मैं एक और आग्रह करना चाहता हूं कि कटिहार में लोको शेड था, आपने उसको खत्म कर दिया। इस समय देश में मात्र 85-86 कोयला इंजन बचे हुए हैं। आपने डीजल इंजन बहुत बढ़ाये हैं क्योंकि बहुत रफ्तार वाली गाड़ियां चलती हैं, यह शुभ लक्ष्ण है देश के लिए और रेलें के लिए। कटिहार में जो लोको शेड था उसके, बदले डीजल शेड की स्थापना की जाए ताकि वहां के श्रमिकों को रोजगार मिल सके। वहां पर रेलवे की 111 एकड़ जमीन पड़ी हुई है जिसका भुगतान रेलवे कर चुकी है। महोदय, मेरा अनुरोध है कि इस जगह पर कोई कारखाना अवश्य खोला जाए ताकि बड़ी संख्या में मजदूरों का जो पलायन दिल्ली, पंजाब और हरियाणा के लिए हो रहा है वह रूक सके और साथ ही वहां पर इन लोगों का जो शोषण होता है वह भी रुक सके।

इसी के साथ में एक बात और कहना चाहूंगा कि पूर्वोत्तर बिहार से आने के लिए सुबह राजधानी पटना के लिए कोई भी ट्रेन नहीं है जो कि किशनगंज, अररिया, पूर्णिया, कटिहार, भागलपुर के उत्तरी हिस्से और खगरिया को भी जोड़ती है। इसलिए एक फास्ट पेसेन्जर ट्रेन सुबह कटिहार से पटना-दानापुर के लिए चलनी चाहिए जिससे आम आदमी राज्य के मुख्यालय में आ सके। मजदूरों की बड़ी संख्या को देखते हुए एक गाड़ी आती है उसमें पैसेन्जर्स को बैठने लिए जगह नहीं मिलती है। इसलिए मेरा आग्रह है कि जो महानन्दा एक्सप्रेस चलती है दिल्ली से कटिहार और कटिहार से दिल्ली के बीच, उसके अलावा भी एक ट्रेन चलनी चाहिए जो मजदूरों के हित में हो और उसमें सारे डिब्बे पैसेन्जर्स के लिए हों। उसकी गति सुपरफास्ट हो और ऐसे सामान्य यात्रियों के बराबर ही हों ताकि मजदूर और गरीब आदमी भी यह अहसास कर सकें कि हमारे लिए भी उतनी ही तेज रफ्तार की गाड़ी है जितनी तेज रफ्तार की सुपरफास्ट और राजधानी गाड़ियां हैं। मेरा आग्रह है कि मंत्री जी मजदूरों के लिए भी एक राजधानी एक्सप्रेस की गति वाली ट्रेन चलाएं जिससे बिहार का मजदूर भी फख्र से यह कह सके कि हमारे लिए भी सुपरफास्ट गाड़ी है जिसमें हम शान से यात्रा करते हैं। आप उस गाड़ी का नाम स्वर्ण जयन्ती एक्सप्रेस दे दीजिए जैसे कि रांची के लिए नाम दिया और मजदूर शान से यह कह सकें कि हमारे लिए भी नीतीश कुमार जी ने एक ऐसी गाड़ी दी है जिससे वे पंजाब, हरियाणा और दिल्ली में कमाने के लिए जा रहे हैं।

रेल मंत्री (श्री नीतीश कुमार): यानी आप बिहार में लोगों को काम नहीं देना चाहते हैं। बिहार का लेबर माइग्रेट करता रहे, बिहार में कभी काम न मिले आप यह चाहते हैं? हमारे लोगों को बाहर नौकरी के लिए जाना पड़ता है, आप चाहते हैं कि वह स्थिति सब दिन बरकरार रहे?

श्री नरेश यादव: मैं चाहता हूं कि बिहार में लोगों को काम मिले। इसके अलावा मैंने यह भी कहा है कि रेलों में मजदूरों के लिए अलग से डिब्बे लगा दिये जाएं ताकि रोज के विवाद पैदा न हों। कटिहार में जो लोको शेड था जिसको आपने हटा दिया है उसको पुनः बना दिया जाए और जो वहां पर 111 एकड़ जमीन है उसमें कोई कारखाना खोलिए। बिहार के मजदूरों में श्रमशक्ति है लेकिन उस श्रमशक्ति को इस्तेमाल करने की जरूरत है। जो योजनायें लम्बित हैं, जो आज तक पूरी नहीं हुई हैं, पूर्व रेल मंत्रियों ने जो जो वायदे किए हैं, आप उनको पूरा कर दीजिए तो यही बहुत बड़ा काम होगा। बिहार का मजदूर बाहर नहीं जाना चाहता है। आप भी तो बिहार के हैं और आप बिहार का दर्द समझते हैं। इस दर्द को आप पूरा कर दीजिए जिससे बिहार का मजदूर अन्य भागों में न जाए। लेकिन साथ ही आज हम पूरे ग्लेवल की बात करते हैं, पूरे विश्व की बात करते हैं, भूमंडलीकरण की बात करते हैं और हम कहते हैं कि बिहार का मजदूर वहां न जाए। हम तो चाहते हैं कि पंजाब का मजदूर बिहार आए, बिहार का मजदूर पंजाब जाए, बिहार का मजदूर बंगाल जाए, और बंगाल का मजदूर कश्मीर जाए। यह तभी होगा जब कि वहां पर इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर बढ़ाया जाएगा। आपसे उम्मीद की जाती है कि आप इस काम को करेंगे।

उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, अंत में मैं यह कहते हुए अपनी बात खत्म करता हूं कि यह बजट सामान्य यात्रियों के लिए असुविधाजनक है। आपने किसी को बख्शा नहीं है। सभी दर्जे के यात्रियों का आपने शोषण किया है। इसलिए हम यह कहना चाहते हैं कि आप इस पर फिर से पुनर्विचार कीजिए और सारे बढ़ाए हुए किराए जो हैं उनको आप हटाइए, रेलवे की गुणवत्ता में सुधार कीजिए और जो रेल का ट्रांसपोर्टेशन है उसमें सुधार कीजिए। मैं रेल मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूं कि आप सिर्फ एक गाड़ी केले के

ट्रांसपोर्टशन के लिए लगा दीजिए। कटिहार जिला और भागलपुर जिला इसके उत्पादन में सबसे आगे अग्रसर हैं। मकई का उत्पादन सबसे ज्यादा बिहार में हो रहा है। वहां पर इसका उत्पादन पंजाब से ज्यादा हो रहा है। सिर्फ आप वहां के लिए ट्रांसपोर्टशन की व्यवस्था कर दीजिए और वहां पर जो लोगों का शोषण हो रहा है उसको रोक दीजिए। लालाओं से वहां पर शोषण हो रहा है, इस बारे में आप बेहतर जानते हैं। यहां पर आप उस शोषण को रोक दीजिए। अगर बिहार के किसानों का माल देश के विभिन्न भागों में जाएगा तो बिहार मालामाल हो जाएगा। रेलों से आप उनको जो सुविधाएं प्रदान करा सकते हैं वह प्रदान कीजिए। अगर ऐसा होगा तो बिहार का मजदूर बाहर नहीं जाएगा। आप बिहार का सम्मान कीजिए पूरा देश देखेगा कि बिहार की जो शक्ति है वह कितनी है और बिहार कैसे काम करता है। उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, आपने मुझे बोलने का अवसर दिया, इसके लिए आपका धन्यवाद।

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN (Kerala): Mr. Vice Chairman, Sir, at the outset, I would like to say that I appreciate the step taken by the hon. Railway Minister in presenting the Status Paper on Indian Railways. That Paper gives us an opportunity to understand the exact condition of the Indian Railways at the moment. Firstly, there is a mismatch between the development of the railways and the economic development. As all of us know, in the matter of economic development, our average growth during the eight Five Year Plans is only a meagre percentage. Even then, the development of the railways could not keep up with whatever development we have got in the economy. And certain other things which have been pointed out are very alarming things. For example, in the matter of track renewal, what is happening? The arrears or the backlog in the matter of track renewal has increased towards the end of the Eighth Five Year Plan from what it was in the beginning of the Plan. If it goes on like this, naturally the condition will deteriorate much more. It will affect the safety of the passengers.

It will create so many situations where accidents will take place. Then another thing that I have to say is about development. Sir, the Minister had pointed out that the share of the contribution from the exchequer to the capital of the railways, that is, year after year it is being reduced. That is one point he has stated in the Status Paper. Sir, of course, this trend will have to be reversed. Firstly, in order to meet the social obligations it is said that the Indian Railways at present is incurring a loss to the tune of about Rs. 1,800 crores. While meeting those social obligations, whatever losses are being incurred that will have to be compensated by the Government from the general exchequer. Besides that, in order to strengthen the economic position of the Railways, adequate funds will have to be given to the Railways from the exchequer. Therefore, I am in full agreement with that and the Government will have to consider that. Unfortunately, even though the Minister had stated all this he could not come forward with a programme to correct these imbalances and to correct these deficiencies in the system of Indian Railways. Sir, one of the deficiencies is the imbalance in the development of the Railways. So, my colleagues from the North-Eastern States were all along repeating their complaints about the lack of development of Railways in their areas. They are very legitimate in raising those complaints. In the same way from several other areas also, people are complaining about the lack of attention to the backward areas. Sir, I am coming from Kerala. As regards Kerala, all alo whichever may be the Governments that v in power at the Centre, we were compla g that we were not being given a pr r, reasonable treatment in the matte of development of Railways. While public sector undertakings were being established, in those days when we had demanded that certain nits would have to be started or located in K la then what we were told was that when you are not having Railways, then how can you have industries? When we asked for Railways, then we were being told "You don't have industries, then why should you have Railways?" All along we were being neglected and we were complaining about it. Now, I shall tell you one or two instances. For example, electrification from Erode to Cochin Harbour Terminus. That is an on-going project which had been there for more than 10 years and even this year what is being provided is only Rs. 20,40,00,000. But if Rs. 8,64,00,000 could be additionally provided, then in that case this project could be completed within one year. Yet a residue is being left. In the same case, take for example,

the doubling of railway line from Kollam to Trivandrum. That project is also an on-going programme which is continuing for the last ten years.

Now, if Rs. 11.43 crores more is alloted, then that could be completed this year. Within the next one year it could be completed. But again a balance is left.

Coming to the doubling of the line from Mangalapuram to Shoranur, the hon. Railway Minister has stated in his Budget speech that the commissioning of the Konkan Railway will benefit Kerala very much because the distance between Kerala and Bombay or between Kerala and Delhi will be very much reduced, and the travel time will also be reduced. It is all right theoretically. But in practice the situation is that from Mangalapuram to Shoranur there is no double line. Before the Konkan Railway was commissioned, the railway line from Mangalapuram to Shoranur had already become saturated, even more than saturated. Therefore, when new trains come by that, the whole traffic is dislocated. And it is not only the rail traffic, as has been pointed out by another colleague here, there are eleven or so level crossings through which a lot of buses are crossing. Now, because of the starting of the Konkan Railway, some more trains are coming and what is happening is that every level crossing is being closed for at least forty times a day. Suppose, a level crossing is closed for ten minutes, then on an average it comes to about 400 minutes in a day. Therefore, the rail traffic is dislocated not only in that portion, but because of that the traffic from Shoranur to Trivandrum is also being dislocated. It so happened because the doubling of this line was not taken up and the construction was not completed by the time the Konkan Railway was commissioned. Anyhow, that happened. Now, my request is that we should have a plan. The Railway Ministry should have a plan to complete the doubling of this line within a period of two years. The work should be completed in two years. Sufficient funds to enable the completion of this work within two years will have to be provided.

Another thing is about one Kuttipuram-Guruvayur line. In fact, from Trichur to Guruvayur the line has already come into existence and the trains are running. But from Kuttipuram to Guruvayur, the link is not being established. A new line is to be started. In that case, there will be a relief in the other railway line also. The total amount required is only Rs. 30 crores. And that project was taken up long ago. But sufficient amount has not been provided for this.

I come to the starting of new lines. It was agreed to start one line from Angamali to Sabarimala. Sabarimala, as you all know, is a pilgrim centre which attracts pilgrims from all over India. It goes through certain undeveloped areas. If a railway line is started, it will be beneficial to the pilgrims and it will also facilitate the economic development of this whole area.

My request is that work should be started this year itself. Some adequate amount will have to be provided for that.

There is another thing with regard to gauge conversion. In Kerala, say, during the last several years when the gauge conversion was being undertaken in several places in the whole of India, we were being neglected in that matter also. Say from Kollam to Madurai or Virud Nagar, there is a metre-gauge line which is in existence for more than 100 years. It was started at the time of the Britishers. That line has become a bottleneck. All the other lines are either broadgauge or have been converted into broad-gauge. This alone is a metre-gauge. It has become a big bottleneck for transportation from Tamil Nadu to Kerala or from Kerala to Tamil Nadu. Therefore, the survey for conversion of that line should also be undertaken. That is another suggestion which I would like to make.

As far as renewal of tracks is concerned, even talking about renewal of tracks, if I remember what I have read in the past is correct, tens of thousands of bridges and culverts in the railways are overaged. If they continue naturally there may be a possibility of occurrence of very serious accidents. Therefore, the whole question of renewal of tracks should be considered. Starting of new railway lines and attending to problems of the under developed areas or neglected areas will have to be given priority. My suggeston is that the Ministry should have a plan, say, within

the next five years there will be a substantial progress in correcting all these deficiencies. Say, for example, in the matter of under-developed areas or neglected areas they will be given proper attention during the next five years and they will be brought at par with other areas. In the same way, in the matter of renewal of tracks, attempts will have to be made to reduce the backlog/arrears. In the same way, there shall be a plan to complete all those things within five years or, say, 7—8 years. But, there should be a plan for that. Unfortunately, I am not finding it.

Then, I come to passenger fares. Sir, I would like to say that the ordinary second-class passengers and II class sleeper-class passengers should be excluded from the fare hike. In the same way, the suburban passengers, the season ticket holders having second-class tickets and even the AC-3-tier passengers should also be relieved of the burden of fare hike. I request, through you, Sir, the Railway Minister to consider the suggestion that I have made and the proposals I have made. I hope...

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Mr. Nitish Kumar will accept all your suggestions and implement them.

SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: No, no. He may not accept all the suggestions, but I think he will take a more reasonable stand. With these words, I conclude. Thank you very much, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Now I think I should take the sense of the House as I have got three more speakers here. Should we continue beyond six because there is a Business of laying of Papers on the Table of the House by the Finance Minister?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Mr. Virendra Kataria, would you like to speak today or would you like to start tomorrow? ...*(Interruptions)*... Okay. Mr. Kataria, please speak for five minutes. We will adjourn at 6 o'clock. Then you can resume tomorrow.

श्री बीरेन्द्र कटारिया (पंजाब) : वाइस-चेयरमेन साहब, आप ने मुझे रेल बजट पर बोलने का मौका दिया इस के लिए मैं आप का शुक्रिया अदा करता हूं।

मैं इस बजट के लिए रेल मंत्री महादय को मुबारकवाद नहीं दे सकता क्योंकि इस बजट में आम आदमी जो कि पहले ही महंगाई के बोझ के तले दबा हुआ है और जिस के ट्रांसपोर्ट के लिए रेलवे ही एक मात्र साधन है, उस के ऊपर बहुत बोझ लादा गया है। सैकंड क्लास पैसेंजर्स का, सीजन टिकिट वालों का हमेशा खास ख्याल रखा गया है, लेकिन इस रेल बजट में उन को भी किराया वृद्धि के अंतर्गत लाया गया है।

वाइस-चैयरमेन साहब, रेलवे हिंदुस्तान का सब से बड़ा ट्रांसपोर्ट सिस्टम है। वह आम आदमी की जरूरतों को पूरा करती है। रेलगाड़ी जब चलती है तो वह हिंदुस्तान की नेशनल इंटीग्रेशन को दर्शाती है। कन्या-कुमारी से लेकर काश्मीर तक हिंदुस्तान की यूनिटी को बरकरार रखती है। हिंदुस्तान के अनाज को एक जगह से ढोकर सारे मुल्क में पहुंचाती है, डिफेंस को फार्सेस एक जगह से दूसरी जगह पहुंचाती है, करोड़ों इंसानों को एक जगह से दूसरी जगह पहुंचाती है और साथ-ही-साथ हिंदुस्तान की इकॉनोमी में एक बहुत बड़ा रोल अदा करती है। आप रेल के डिब्बे में बैठ जाइए, उस में आप को एक मिनी हिंदुस्तान नजर आएगा जिस में काश्मीरी भी हैं, पंजाबी भी है, बिहारी भी हैं। इस तरह हिंदुस्तान का मिनी नक्शा रेल के डिब्बे में मिलेगा। वाइस-चैयरमेन साहब हिंदुस्तान की डिफेंस के लिए, हिंदुस्तान की इकॉनोमी के लिए और हिंदुस्तान के आम आदमी की आवागमी के लिए और हिंदुस्तान की एकता के लिए रेलवे की बहुत बड़ी अहमियत है।

[1] ڈاکٹر ویرندر کٹاریہ "پنجاب": وائس چیئرمین صاحب - آپ نے مجھے ریل بجٹ پر بولنے کا موقع دیا اسکے لئے میں آپکا شکریہ ادا کرتا ہوں -
میں اس بجٹ کے لئے ریل منتری مہودے کو مبارکباد نہیں دے سکتا - کیونکہ اس بجٹ میں عام آدمی جو کہ پہلے ہی مہنگائی کے بوجھ تلے دبا ہوا ہے اور جسکے ٹرانسپورٹ کے لئے ریلوے ہی ایک ماتر سادھن ہے اسکے اوپر

[1] [Transliteration in Arabic Script

بہت بوجھ لادا گیا ہے۔ سیکنڈ کلاس پسنجرس کا، سیزن ٹکٹ والوں کا ہمیشہ خاص خیال رکھا گیا ہے۔ لیکن اس ریل بجٹ میں انکو بھی کرایہ وردھی سے انتر گت لایا گیا ہے۔

وائس چیئرمین صاحب۔ ریلوے ھندوستان کا سب سے بڑا ٹرانسپورٹ سسٹم ہے، وہ عام آدمی کی ضرورتوں کو پورا کرتی ہے۔ ریل گاڑی جب چلتی ہے تو وہ ھندوستان کی نیشنل انٹیگریشن کو درشاتی ہے۔ کنیہ کماری سے لیکر کشمیر تک ھندوستان کی یونٹی کو برقرار رکھتی ہے۔ ھندوستان کے اناج کو ایک جگہ سے ڈھوکر سارے ملک میں پہنچاتی ہے، ڈفینس فورسیز کو ایک جگہ سے دوسری جگہ پہنچاتی ہے، کروڑوں انسانوں کو ایک جگہ سے دوسری جگہ پہنچاتی ہے اور ساتھ ہی ساتھ ھندوستان کی اکانومی میں ایک بہت بڑا رول ادا کرتی ہے۔ آپ ریل کے ڈبہ میں بیٹھ جایئے، آپ کو ایک منی ھندوستان نظر آئیگا جسمیں کشمیری بھی ہیں پنجابی بھی ہیں بہاری بھی ہیں۔ اسطرح ھندوستان کا منی نقشہ ریل ڈبہ میں ملے گا۔ وائس چیئرمین صاحب۔ ھندوستان کس طرح سے لئے، ھندوستان کی اکانومی کیلئے اور ھندوستان کے عام آدمی کی آواگمن کے لئے اور ھندوستان کی ایکتا کیلئے ریلوے کی بہت بڑی اہمیت ہے۔

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Mr. Kataria, you can continue the debate tomorrow. Now, I call upon the Finance Minister to lay a Paper on the Table of the House. (*Interruptions*) Before that I have the name of Shri Pranab Mukherjee; he has given a notice. He want to intervene on this matter.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Mr. Minister, would you take your seat so that I can speak?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): You want to intervene on the same matter?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: It is in connection with that only, Paper to be Laid on the Table. It is a notification, Excise Duty notification No. 15/98 dated 3rd June 1998 seeking to reduce excise duty from 35% *ad volorem* to 32% *ad valorem* on goods commonly known as petrol, falling under sub-heading.... I do not know whether you have circulated an explanatory memorandum together with the notification. I have not got the explanatory memorandum and that is why this question arises. If I had got that, perhaps, I would have understood it. On 1st June, while presenting the Budget, the Finance Minister introduced a series of changes in the rates of taxes and duties. So far as our system is concerned, the Finance Bill is the only Bill which becomes operational immediately with its introduction and its operationalisation is institutionalised through a series of notifications which would be issued. The Finance Minister also mentioned in paragraph 179 of his statement that copies of the notification giving effect to the above changes in customs and excise duties will be laid on the Table of the House in due course. Therefore, this is the scheme of things and in that context what I would like to know is, what is the effect of the

rate of excise duty on petroleum products from the 1st of June till the date when you are having a revised notification reducing it from 35% to 32%? Can I assume that from 1st June, after the presentation of the Budget, the rate of duty of petroleum *ad valorem* of 35% which you had decided and you are fully competent will come down? There is no denial to the right to reduce it to 32% *ad valorem* when you are placing this notification on the Table of the House.

You have decided it and there is no denying the fact that the Government has a right to reduce it, as you are reducing it to 32 per cent from today by placing this notification on the Table of this House. I would like to know whether my contention is right. Secondly, if it is not so and that it should have been 32 per cent *ad valorem* because of certain communication gap which we are hearing of that certain things have taken place, then how are you going to tackle it because I am afraid this may lead to a series of litigation? Therefore, firstly, please explain as to what is the contention and as to what is the connotation of this notification, and what would be the implications of this notification, and what would happen between the presentation of the Budget on 1st June and the placing of this notification? If you say, "Yes, there were two rates of duties and one was that from 7.00 P.M. on 1st June till the placing of this notification there was 35% *ad valorem* duty, I can understand it. I have no problem. If your contention is that you have changed the rates of duty, then this notification becomes infructuous. What is the exact position? Please explain this thing to me.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Mrs. Sinha, do you also want to speak on the same issue? ...(*Interruptions*)... Please be brief so that the Minister can respond to the queries raised. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA (Bihar): Sir, I would like to know whether the Supplementary List of Business was discussed with the Chair because this was not circulated to us beforehand. ...(*Interruptions*)...the Finance Minister declared in his Budget Speech that petrol prices would be hiked by one rupee per litre and accordingly excise duty would be lowered.

He said that it would be effective from the midnight of 2nd June. Today is 3rd June and we have had another Supplementary List of Business and the Minister of Finance is going to say something. So, what is happening? One day the Finance Minister comes and says something and the next the MOS comes and says something else. Can they not say the same thing on the same day? Why should there be any confusion? I support the contention of Pranabda that this should not be done. ...(*Interruptions*)..

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): As far as Business of the House is concerned, it is decided by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman. ...(*Interruptions*)... Mr. Jibon Roy, are you also going to speak on the same issue? ...(*Interruptions*).... Please be brief. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI JIBON ROY: Sir, the Minister should not be allowed to place this notification on the Table of the House. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): They are seeking clarifications. ...(*Interruptions*)... Please continue.

SHRI JIBON ROY: The first reason for my saying so is that the notice has been given just now. Secondly, the explanatory memorandum has not been circulated. Thirdly, probably it has encroached upon the privilege of the House because the Finance Bill was introduced by the Finance Minister on 1st June. So, it is the property of the House as it is of the Government. When it has been introduced in the House, how can the Ministry make any changes in it without the permission of the House? Fourthly, we discussed this matter during the last two days because something wrong has been done by the dealers of petrol pumps and the Ministry of Petroleum. Now, it seems that something is spoken by the Finance Minister and something else is written in the detailed explanation. It was written as 35 per cent. If the increase is only of one rupee, it comes to about 32 per cent. Now this change. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): That duty was additional. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI JOBON ROY: Whatever may be.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN(SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Re. 1 was the Cess... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI JIBON ROY: Sir, the change is made in the Finance Bill by the Ministry. They cannot do it. Now, it is the property of the House and the hon. Finance Minister should move before the House for the change but not the Ministry. This is my submission. That is why, I think, the Minister should not be allowed to lay the paper today. Let him come tomorrow.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Mr. Minister, can you give explanation to this? Afterwards, you can lay it on the Table of the House...*(Interruptions)*... Then, Mr. Minister, you can lay it...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, the paper is to be laid because it has financial implications. What I would suggest is, the hon. Minister should give an explanation because a couple of legal issues will also come in. I am not obstructing the laying of the paper on the Table of the House. If the rate of duty is to be effected, the Notification must be laid on the Table of the House. We should not take any obstructionist approach towards that. With regard to amendment to the Finance Bill, the Ministry is absolutely within its right because this is the only way by which even before the approval of the Parliament becomes operational for 75 days, the Parliament has its right to reject it. But from the moment it is introduced till the expiry of 75 days, it will remain operational and in between the Ministry has the right to make any amendment, if they like. In the past also we had done it. I am not quarrelling on that point, but what I am apprehensive of is, no tax can be levied save and except with the authority of the law passed by the Parliament. That is a Constitutional provision. Now, you are making certain changes which are within your power. But, by making those changes, are you plugging the loopholes between the commitments made by the hon. Finance Minister while presenting the Budget and the time by which you are bringing this Notification? Unless these two are tied up together and explained adequately, there will be a serious litigation which may block your revnue. This is my apprehension.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): I think, the notification has been issued. It is a mere formality to lay it on the Table of the House by the Minister ...*(interruptions)*... it is already in operation because the Notification has already been issued.

प्रो॰ विजय कुमार मल्होत्रा (दिल्ली): मैं यही कह रहा था कि बहुत बार इसके पहले, यह एडमिनिस्टर्ड प्राइसिस, पैट्रोल की प्राइसिस, बजट से पहले कई बार बढ़ाई गई हैं, कई बार कम की गई हैं। यह पावर एग्ज़ीक्यूटिव पावर है, इसके मुताबिक वे उसको कर सकते थे। जो कुछ पिछले दो-तीन दिन में हुआ है वह ठीक नहीं हुआ है, अच्छा नहीं हुआ है और उसको हमने अमैंड करने की कोशिश की है और इसलिए अब ये एक चीज़ ले आए हैं तो उसको ले करने में तो कोई ऑब्जेक्शन नहीं होना चाहिए।

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: I am not objecting to the laying. There is a difference between administered price and Excise Duty. The Notification deals with Excise Duty ...*(interruptions)*...

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: it can be done even without ...*(interruptions)*...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES): Mr. Malhotra, the Minister is on his legs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE —Contd.

Notification of he Ministry of Finance

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Persions (Shri R. Janarthanam): I lay on the Table, under sub-section (2) of section 38 of the Central Excise and Salt Act, 1944, a copy (in English and Hindi) of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) Notification No. 15/98-Central Excise, dated the 3rd June, 1998, seeking to reduce excise duty from 35% *ad valorem* to 32% *ad valorem* on goods commonly known as petrol, falling under sub-heading Nos. 2710.11, 2710.12, 2710.13 and 2710.19 of the Central Excise Tariff, together with explanatory memorandum thereon.

Secondly, I thank Pranabji for allowing me to lay the paper on the Table of the House. As has been rightly said by Shri Malhotraji, who